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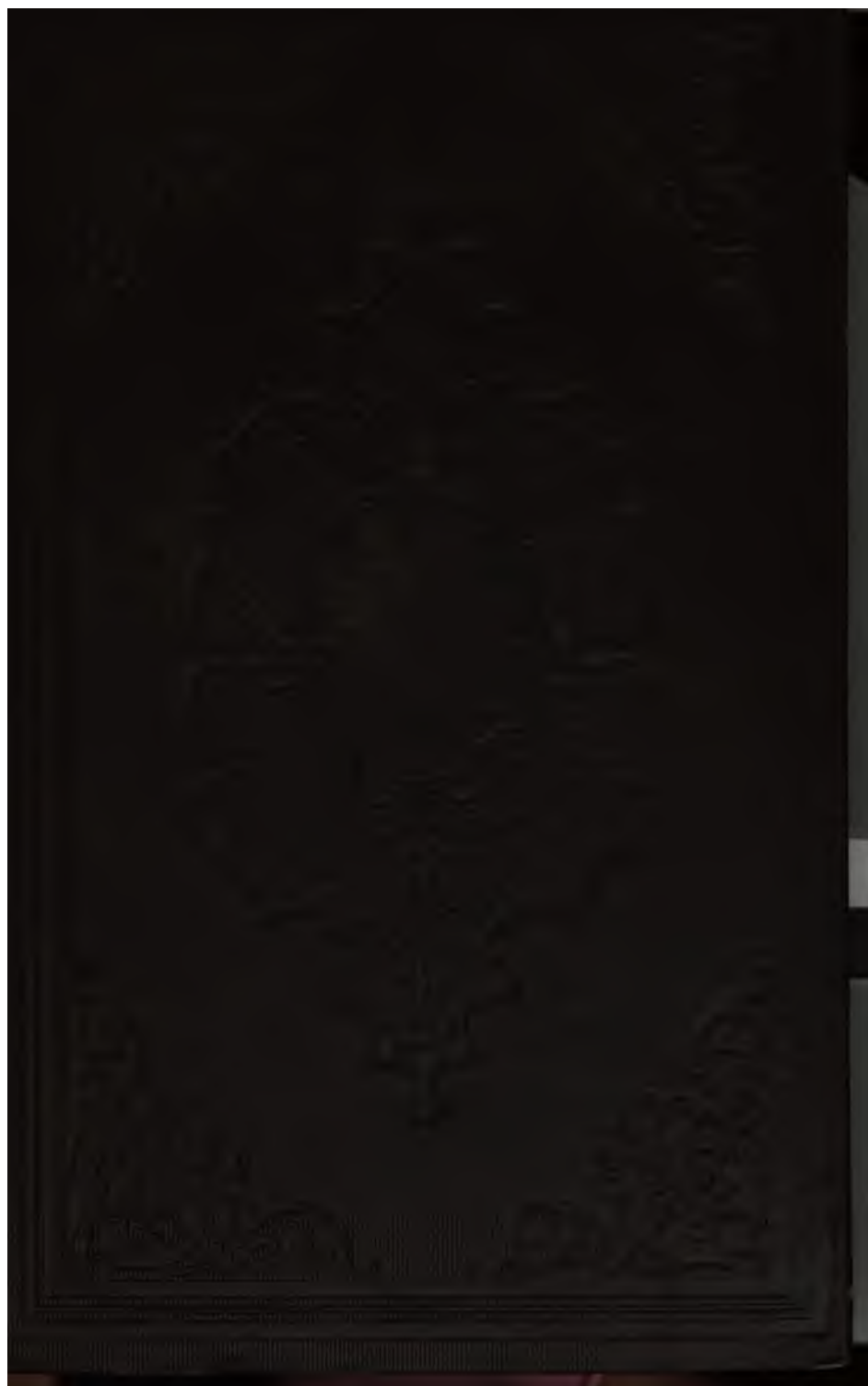
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Howland

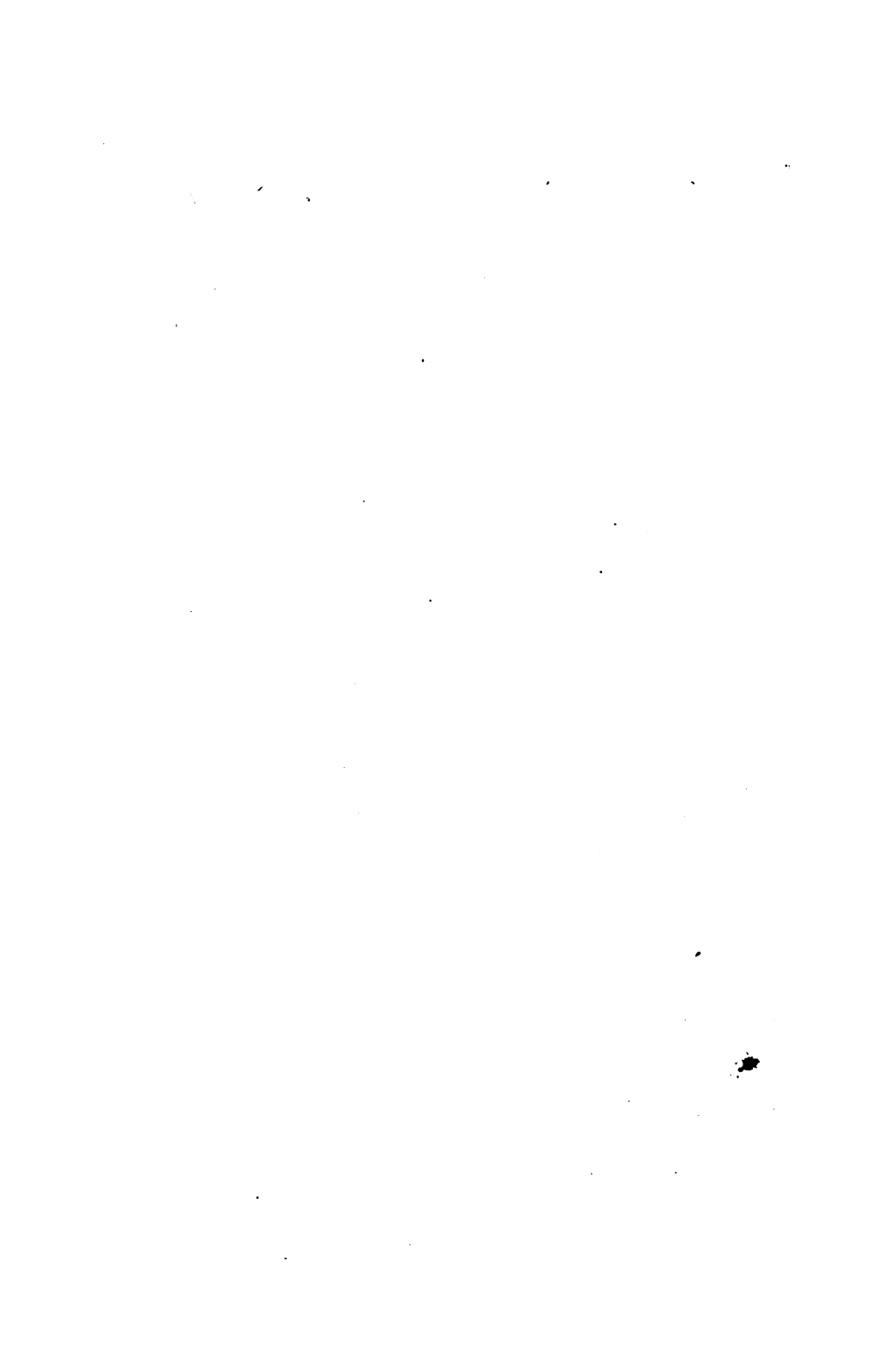
K7
THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL
IN
CAMBRIDGE.













*With Affection and Regard
John Howland,*

L. Grozier Lith. Boston

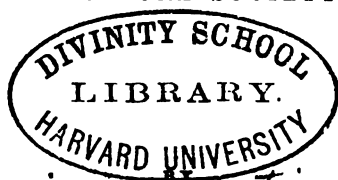
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1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 26



THE
LIFE AND RECOLLECTIONS
OF
JOHN HOWLAND,

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE RHODE ISLAND
HISTORICAL SOCIETY.



EDWIN M. STONE.

PROVIDENCE:
GEORGE H. WHITNEY.
1857.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1856,
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P R E F A C E .

THIS volume was mostly written as the recreation of invalid hours, during the winter succeeding Mr. Howland's decease. On the return of health, a press of professional duties caused it to be laid aside, to be completed at a more convenient season. Until recently the opportunity has not occurred. Delay, however, has been attended with advantage. By it, valuable materials have come into the author's possession which otherwise would not have been available.

Some years preceding his death, Mr. Howland, at the request of a member of his family, begun to write down his recollections of men and events in Rhode Island, particularly during the revolutionary period. Had this record been commenced and pursued before the infirmities of advanced age rendered writing fatiguing, a large amount of matter important to the local and general historian, now lost, would have been preserved. It is gratifying that so much has been saved.

Mr. Howland took pleasure in communicating information to inquirers, and it was the privilege of the writer, at different times, to draw freely from the stores of his retentive memory. From these materials, combined with selections from his published writings and the incidents supplied by many of his personal friends, the narrative has been so woven that several chapters partake of the character of an autobiography. His varied experience and minute observation while in the Continental service, his intimate acquaintance with the leading men of Rhode Island, and his personal knowledge of Washington,

Greene, Lee, Gates, Sullivan, Arnold, Paul Jones, and other distinguished officers of the revolution, impart to these recollections an unusual historic value.

Some, long familiar with Mr. Howland, may miss incidents and personal anecdotes which would have given additional interest to this work. But a moment's reflection will satisfy such that an attempt to collect every detail worthy of perpetuation, embraced in a life of nearly five score years, must have proved abortive. And however their loss may be regretted, enough, it is believed, have been preserved, to illustrate the character of one whose influence for more than half a century was steadily devoted to the welfare of the rising institutions of his adopted home—enough to show what he was, and how faithfully he met the responsibilities of his station.



John Howland

(Signature at 90 years of age.)

INTRODUCTION.

HOWLAND, a numerous name in the United States, is of English origin. It is traced through ancient records, to "John Howland, of London, gentleman, citizen and salter," born (probably) between 1515 and 1518, early in the reign of Henry VIII. He married Anne, daughter of ——— Grenway, of Clay, county of Norfolk. She died in 1588. The issue of this marriage was eleven sons and one daughter. The eldest son, Richard, born 1540, was made Bishop of Peterboro'. To him, by patent, dated June 10, 1584, family arms were confirmed, and allowed to all the posterity of his father. Sir Giles Howland, seventh son of John, married first, Anne, daughter of Sir John Hart, and second, Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Rivers, both wives being of London. The fruits of these unions were three sons and four daughters. His eldest son, Sir John Howland, of Streatham, Co.

Surrey, Knt., died 1621, and was succeeded by his brother Geoffrey, as Lord of the Manor of Tooting Bec. Elizabeth Howland, grand daughter of Geoffrey, married Wrotherby Russell, Marquis of Tavistock, afterwards Duke of Bedford. He died 1711; she 1724; from whom the present Duke of Bedford and Baron Howland.

John Howland, brother of the Bishop, and second son of John of London, was born 1541. He married Emma, daughter and heiress of Nicholas Revell, citizen of London. In this line descended John Howland, born 1592, and one of the founders of the Plymouth Colony.

Whether he was one of the original company in Holland, or accompanied Carver on his second return from England to Leyden, is unknown. It is not improbable, however, that he was among the number who waited at Southampton the return of the company, preparatory to sailing for America. On that memorable voyage, during "a mighty storm," he narrowly escaped drowning.* At the time of his arrival at Plymouth, he was twenty-eight years of age. Prince, in his chronology, following Morton, speaks of him as "of Carver's family." Governor Bradford, in his history of Plymouth Plantation, recently published, calls him Carver's servant, an expression that may bear a legal definition, though it has been conjectured that Carver, having advanced him means with which to procure his outfit, the young self-reliant adventurer had agreed to "work out" the debt on

* Bradford, p. 76.

arriving in the new world. Be that as it may, he was associated with the leaders in all the primary movements for effecting a settlement, and was early called by the colonists to discharge duties requiring sound judgment, business talent, and great intrepidity. On Morton's list he is the thirteenth of the forty-one who signed the memorable compact formed on board the Mayflower in Cape Cod harbor, and was one of the ten "principal men," who with eight scamen, were "sente out" on the 6th December following, to discover a locality suitable for their future home. Driven by storm into Plymouth harbor, the little band of explorers went on shore, and thus was conferred on them the distinction of having stood on "Forefathers' Rock," since "become an object of veneration," five days before the Mayflower with the residue of her company, cast anchor in the desired haven.

In 1627, he was associated with Governor Bradford and six other principal men of the colony, in a contract, made with the London merchant adventurers, in which they agreed to give them £1800 for the relinquishment of their claims upon the Plymouth lands, and also to assume the colony debts, amounting to £2400 more. As a consideration for this, the "undertakers," as they were called, were to have the monopoly of the whole trade of the colony for six years. In 1633 he was elected an assistant in the government of the colony, which office he held for several years. He had the chief management of the undertakers' trading establishment on the Kennebec, where his

firmness was signally tested by the headstrong and reckless Hocking,* and for eighteen years he was a representative of the town of Plymouth in the General Court of the colony. In the records he is honorably mentioned as "a godly man and an ancient professor in the ways of Christ," who "lived to the age of eighty years, and proved a useful instrument of good in his place." At the ordination of Mr. John Cotton jr., in 1667, he "was appointed by the church to join in the imposition of hands." With one exception, (John Alden,) he outlived all the signers of the Mayflower compact, and of the entire body of pioneers "by whose instrumentality the great question was settled as to what nation

*Hocking belonged to the plantation at Piscataqua, in which Lord Say and Lord Brook were concerned. He attempted to trade within the limits of the Plymouth patent on the Kennebec river, and by going up the river above the trading house of the Plymouth company, to intercept their trade from that direction. The spirit in which this encroachment was resisted by Howland, may be learned from the following deposition copied from the Old Colony Records at Plymouth, by A. L. Russel, Esq., and communicated by him to the New-England Historical and Genealogical Register for January, 1855:

Plymouth, 1634.

PRENC GOVERNOR.

This deponent saith, that upon the — day of April, John Hocking riding at anker within our limitts above the howse, Mr. John Howland went up to him wth owr bark and charged the said Hocking to weigh his ankors and depart, who answered hee would not, wth foule speeches, demaunding whie he spake not to him that sent him fourth. Answer was mad by John Howland that the last yeare a boat was sent, having no other busines, to know whether it was theire mind that hee should thus wronge us in our trade; who returned answer they sent him not hether, and therefore Mr. Howland tould him that hee should not now suffer him ther to ride. John Hocking demaunded what he would doe, whether he would shout; Mr. Howland answered no, but he would put him from thence. John Hocking said and swore he would not shoot, but swore iff we came a bord him he would send us ——. Thus passing by him we came to an anker sumthing nere his barke. Mr. Howland bid three

of Europe should predominate in North America," none, at his decease, were left in Plymouth. Governor Bradford says he "became a useful member both in church and commonwealth," and the frequency with which his name is mentioned in the Plymouth colony records, as connected with important transactions, furnishes abundant evidence that he was one of the most energetic and efficient of the Pilgrim band.

Until the publication of Bradford's history it had been supposed, and so stated by several historians, that the Pilgrim Howland married Governor Carver's daughter. General tradition, handed down in an unbroken line from the decease of the former in 1672, had uniformly and without question so declared. It is now said that Carver had no daughter, which, if true, affords a remarkable illustration of historic uncertainty. This state-

of his men goe cutt his cable whose names weare John Frish, Thomas Savory and William Rennoles, who p'sently cut one, but were put by the other by the strength of the streame. Mr. Howland, seeing they could not well bring the cannow to the other cable, caled him a bord, and bed Moses Talbott goe wth them, who accordingly went very reddyly and brought the canow to Hockings cable. He being on deck came with a carbine and a pistole in his hand and p'sently p'sented his peece at Thomas Savory; but the canow wth the tide was put nere the bow of the bark, wch Hocking seeing p'sently put his peece almost to Moyses Talbotts head, wch Mr. Howland seeing cald to him desiering him not to shut his man, but to take himselfe for his mark; saying his men did but that which he commaunded them, and therefore desiered him not to hurt any of them. If any wrong was don it was himselfe that did it, and therfore cald again to him to take him for his marke, saying he stod very fayer; but Hocking would not hear nor looke towards owr barke, but p'sently shooteth Moyses in the head, and p'sently took up his pistoll in his hand, but the Lord stayed him from doing any further hurt; by a shot from owr barke, himself was presently shoote dead, being shott nere the same place in the head wher he had murderously shot Moyses.

ment rests on the fact that in his enumeration of Carver's family, written thirty years after his decease, Bradford makes no mention of children; and further, that he says Howland married Elizabeth, daughter of John Tilly. But this statement is not so conclusive as would at first sight be supposed; for we find that by the rule governing the allotment of acre lots to each member of a family in 1623, he received four acres, which indicates the number of his own. Now if Elizabeth Tilly was his first and only wife, the marriage could not have occurred earlier than 1622, as she would then have been only sixteen years of age, and could hardly have been the mother of two children at two distinct births, in 1623. In 1627, in the division of the cattle, the names of his wife and of their two children, John and Desire, are mentioned, showing that no increase of family had taken place. Mitchell in his history of Bridgewater, says that Howland's wife and two children came over in 1627, but as he gives no authority for the statement, we are left in uncertainty with regard to its accuracy. Should it appear, on further research, that he was twice married, the apparently conflicting statements may be reconciled. For the present, it may suffice to say that his family consisted of four sons and six daughters, viz. John, married Mary Lee, Oct. 26, 1651, and settled in Barnstable; Jabez, married Bethia Thacher, only daughter of Anthony Thacher of Yarmouth, and settled in Bristol, R. I.; Isaac, married Elizabeth, daughter of George Vaughan, and settled in Middleborough; Joseph, married Elizabeth Southworth, only child

of Thomas Southworth, 1664, and settled in Plymouth; Desire, second child, married John Gorham, 1643, who died Feb. 5, 1676—she died Oct. 13, 1683; Hope, married John Chipman, of Barnstable; Elizabeth, married first, Ephraim Hicks, of Plymouth, Sept. 13, 1649, and second, John Dickerson, of Barnstable; Lydia, married James Brown, of Swansea; Hannah, married Nathaniel Bosworth, of Hull, afterwards of Swansea; Ruth, married Thomas Cushman, of Plymouth, November, 17, 1664.



CHAPTER I.

JOHN HOWLAND, of the fourth generation from John Howland of Plymouth, and son of Joseph and Sarah Howland, was born in Newport, R. I., October 31st, A. D. 1757. His mother was descended from James Barker, whose name stands second in the Charter of King Charles as one of the proprietors forming the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, and also as "one of the ten assistants."

There was nothing in the infancy of this their second son that particularly distinguished him from other children; but when five or six years old, he began to develop those qualities of independence, firmness, freedom of thought and expression, which entered largely into the mental temperament of his Pilgrim ancestor.

Newport, at this time, was in the zenith of her commercial prosperity, and the wharves crowded with shipping, were attractions that frequently

diversified his rambles along the sea shore and over the pastures adjacent to the town. The period was then approaching when a great civil convulsion was to be experienced on the American Continent. Already the murmurs of the Colonies were heard, and the haughty bearing of the mother country was rapidly dissolving the ties of affection by which they were bound to her. At length the stamp act, the impost on tea, and kindred outrages, touched chords which vibrated in thunder-tones on the waters of the Narragansett in 1772, and at Lexington, Concord and Bunker Hill, in 1775. Children, even, were inoculated with the popular indignation. They listened to discussions of these oppressive acts, which were alike free at the fire-side, in the bar-room club, and in the public assembly; and though the consequences they involved were too vast for childish comprehension, they doubtless planted in the mind of young Howland those ideas of right which some years later ripened into active hostility to wrong.

The stamp act passed in 1765, was among the earliest deeds of oppression that excited his childhood ire. He witnessed the attempt to enforce it in his native town. "Stamp masters," he says, "were appointed to carry it into execution. Three were thought sufficient for our Colony; Martin Howard, Dr. Moffat, and Augustus Johnston, all resident in Newport. The crisis had now arrived. Their office was one of great peril. Johnston declared he would not act. Howard and Moffat had more courage, till the doors and windows of their houses, with all the furniture they contained,

were in one night demolished. I saw the ruins the next morning. It was a fearful sight for a boy of eight years old to witness. Every apartment was piled with valuable property, including books and papers. In the other colonies the stamp masters were compelled to abandon the service, and it is not impossible that the transactions in Newport may have hastened their decision.

"These proceedings in the colonies produced the repeal of the obnoxious act on the 18th March, 1766. This repeal, though accompanied by what was styled the declaratory act, which was passed to secure the consistency of those members who had first voted for the act and then for the repeal, caused rejoicings and thanksgivings throughout the colonies, and first brought liberty trees and liberty polls into fashion.*

"Justice, as well as the honor of the British government, required that ample compensation be awarded to the two commissioners of the stamp office for their loyalty as well as for the destruction of their property. It was expected that the colony or the town of Newport would be called on to pay the amount of damage, but this would have been a hopeless expedient for the claimants. Howard was appointed Chief Justice of North Carolina, with a salary of £1000 sterling per year. Moffat sailed for England, and after a long delay obtained a pension. Two or three years after the settlement of Howard in Carolina, he returned to close

* "Providence had its liberty tree, a large Elm, in front of the tavern on Olney street, where immense quantities of punch were consumed."—*MS. Lecture.*

up his business or visit his friends in Newport, and publicly declared that he had no quarrel with the sons of liberty in that town, since it was they who had made him Chief Justice of his adopted State."

Newport, at this period, furnished but few means for general education. No public school system was then in existence, and except to children of wealthy parentage, the higher forms of culture were inaccessible. From his parents the subject of this memoir received his rudimental instruction. By them he was early taught to read and write. His principal reading book was a black letter bible, printed in London, 1610. This in connexion with two other versions in common type, he read several times through, comparing chapter with chapter as he went along, thus laying the foundation for that exact knowledge of the sacred scriptures which he subsequently possessed. These, with the Psalter and spelling book, comprised the entire list of school books for the first twelve years of his life. To him the advantage of this home instruction was two-fold. In the first place it kept him at the most impressible age, constantly within the circle of parental influence, shielding him from the exposure of promiscuous street associations, and at the same time strengthening a relish for domestic society that never afterwards forsook him. And in the second place, his mental training to the extent it reached, was thorough. The oral explanations accompanying his lessons, and the conversations to which they led, enlarged his field of thought, hastened the maturity of his mind, and disposed him for the patient research so extensively pur-

sued in riper years. At nine years of age he attended school for a short time, and evinced there the same eagerness for knowledge that he had manifested at home. The hours of study were faithfully improved, and within a limited range his progress was not exceeded by others of his age.

It was the practice of the teacher to have trials in spelling, the pupils of the class taking position according to scholarship in that department. This excited a lively emulation in which young Howland participated. It was his ambition to stand at the head of the class. After many trials he succeeded in "spelling up next to the head;" but there he was held in check by a boy his equal in ambition and careful preparation. Day after day they stood side by side with little prospect of change. To impart additional interest to the "spelling match," as it was called, the pupils were permitted in rotation to select and give out words to the class. Then came the search for hard words, and the consequent anxiety to master them. To this search the lad Howland gave diligence, with what success the sequel will show. At length his turn, impatiently waited for, came. "You can spell the class, John," said the teacher, and John stood forth. "Spell Mahershalalhashbaz," said he, addressing his rival with a mischievous look of triumph. The boy stared, and the teacher smiled at the odd sounding name. "Spell Mahershalalhashbaz," repeated John, with becoming gravity. The boy hesitated. "Spell it," said the teacher. He commenced, and broke down at the third syllable. The

next pupil made the attempt, but failed. The remainder of the class tried it, with no better success. The head of the class was crest fallen, and betrayed his vexation. "John is'nt fair," said he; "there is no such word." The teacher looked as though he was of the same opinion, and turning to John, inquired, "did you take that word from a book?" "Yes sir," was the reply. "What book?" "The bible, sir." "Show it me." "There it is, sir," said John, handing him the bible open, and pointing to Isaiah viii. 1. The teacher took the book, and looking at the passage, said, "it is all fair, boys; here is the word. John has been the most particular in reading the bible." "But he can't spell it," replied one of the class, nettled with the recollection of his own failure. "You hear that, John," said the teacher, "can you spell Mahershalalhashbaz?" "Yes sir." "Let me hear you then." The word was spelled, every syllable correctly divided, and the whole distinctly pronounced. "Very well—take your place at the head of the class." And thus the long cherished desire was gratified, leaving his defeated antagonist to puzzle in future years over the hidden significance of a word fitly chosen for the trial.

The love of reading so early developed, increased with advancing years. Books were his choicest recreations, and to be allowed an extra hour in such society was a privilege for which he readily sacrificed out of door pastimes. It did not take him long, however, to exhaust the little stock within his reach, and great was his joy when his father returning from New-York, brought home a copy of

Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, a book second only to the bible in the impression it has made on the Anglo-Saxon race. The pictures with which it was illustrated, if not the most finished specimens of art, charmed his childish eye, while the visions of the Slough of Despond, the assault of Apollyon, Doubting Castle, Vanity Fair, the land of Beulah and the Celestial City, imparted a devout complexion to his imagination, and deepened the impressions of christian truth so faithfully inculcated at the hearth-stone. This taste for reading was observed and encouraged by his pastor, Rev. William Vinal, in whose family for a short time he resided, and who gave him free access to his library. Privileges of a similar kind were afforded him by Rev. Gardiner Thurston, pastor of the First Baptist church, which were eagerly accepted and improved.

Mr. Vinal ceased from the ministry in 1768, and was succeeded by Rev. Samuel Hopkins, distinguished as the founder of a system of divinity bearing his name. Ordinations and installations were in those days of rare occurrence, and the settlement of a new pastor was preceded by preparations, and surrounded with excitements, well calculated to arrest the attention and fix the details strongly in the memory of the young. Of this event Mr. Howland says, "Dr. Hopkins was heralded by the reputation of having written a book. In those days for a minister to write a book was unusual, and the author was, as a matter of course, looked upon as an extraordinary man. Such was the impression in regard to Dr. Hopkins. I remember the first Sabbath he preached. The house

was crowded. My seat was in the boys' gallery. The Dr. took for his text Acts 10:19, "Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?" This question I supposed to be addressed to the deacons, who sat in their seat in front of the pulpit, and I expected every moment to see one of them rise and reply. But to my surprise neither of them stirred. The Dr. repeated the text, "I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?" Surely, thought I, they will answer now, and I rose on tiptoe and leaned over the gallery to see which of them would answer. But both of them kept quiet in their seats. What stupid men, I thought; why don't deacon ——— get up and tell him the reason they sent for him? Neither of them took any notice of the question, and so he went on to assign the reasons that should govern a society when they settled a minister. Dr. Hopkins was more eminent for learning than interesting as a preacher. His manner was dull and his voice unmusical. He would sometimes, in his sermon, go on in a low tone as though he was conversing with one or two persons, then he would seem to remember that a congregation was before him, and suddenly raise his voice to its highest pitch. Those who liked oratory and did not care much about sentiment, were not pleased with him. He was an excellent man though not an attractive preacher. He was kind, sympathetic and benevolent. He was attentive to his people, and took much notice of children. I always thought his life was a contradiction of his creed."

The home religious training of young Howland was judiciously strengthened by the christian labors of Madame Sarah Osborn, a lady of great moral worth, and for about thirty years a useful and honored teacher of youth. She devoted every Saturday afternoon to the religious instruction of children, and to her, in company with many others, he stately recited lessons from the Assembly's catechism, at which times he received the benefit of her counsels and prayers.

"A son of Dr. Stiles," says Mr. Howland, "was my mate in our recitations to Madame Osborn.—On one occasion, when questioning the class on the Assembly's catechism, young Stiles was unable to answer. Madame O. expressed surprise, when he replied, "I never learned *that* catechism." "Why, does not your father teach you this catechism?" she asked. "No ma'am," he answered, "but I know another in the same book." She then examined him in that, and he answered very correctly."

Other methods were also employed for the spiritual improvement of her young charge, and among them religious meetings, at which they were sometimes addressed by clergymen. Of one of these meetings, at which a clergyman from Connecticut officiated, Mr. Howland thus speaks: "I can just remember Rev. Mr. Buel. He was called one of the most powerful preachers of his day. Under his ministry there was a great revival of religion. He came to Newport and made quite a stir. Everybody went to hear him. He had a noble voice, and I remember I thought he was the best reader

I ever heard. While at Newport he held a children's meeting at the house of Madame Osborn, who was a sort of lady abbess of the place. This meeting I attended, but when I arrived I found the room so crowded that I could not get inside the door. A great many women were present, of which I complained to my mother as an intrusion. For the first singing Mr. Buel gave out the eighty-second Psalm, Watts' version, beginning,

“ Children, in years and knowledge young,
Your parents hope, your parents joy,
Attend the counsels of my tongue,
Let pious thoughts your minds employ.”

The second was the eighth Psalm, commencing :

“ Almighty Ruler of the skies,
Through the wide earth thy name is spread,
And thine eternal glories rise
O'er all the heavens thy hands have made.”

The third I have forgotten.”

Through life Mr. Howland cherished a warm affection for the memory of this devout mother in Israel, and seldom visited Newport without renewing an oft-repeated endeavor to identify her grave.

The year 1770 was an interesting epoch in the life of young Howland—the starting point, as it were, of a career to manhood and usefulness. A relative of his father, Mr. Benjamin Gladding, a worthy citizen of Providence, on a visit to Newport, proposed to receive him as an apprentice to the business of hair-dressing. The proposition

was not at first favorably entertained by the parents. The breaking up of home relations was a trial for which they were not prepared. They thought their son too young to encounter the exposures of a town life, away from their watch and care. But he, fearless as ignorant of peril, was set upon embracing the opportunity afforded him of seeing the world, a considerable portion of which, to his youthful imagination, was embraced in the town of Providence. A reluctant consent was finally yielded, and the necessary preparations made for his departure. Happily for parental conscientiousness and affection, no cause for regret ever arose.

On the eighth of April, in the thirteenth year of his age, he bade adieu to his native town, and embarked on board a packet, commanded by Capt. Hoysteed Hacker, who afterwards, in the war of the revolution, was a captain in the navy of the United States. "We had," he says, "a pleasant passage up the river of three hours and twenty minutes, and landed at the packet wharf nearly opposite the place where the Providence Bank now stands. On this lot there then stood the old garrison house, belonging to the family of Field, which they had held from the first settlement of the town. This house, in the Indian war of 1675, had been fitted with gratings at the windows as a garrison for the people to flee to when the town was attacked. Several other of the largest houses had been fortified in the same way, and which had probably saved the south when the north end was burnt, in March, 1676. The old garrison house and lot was,

in 1772 or '73, purchased by Mr. Joseph Brown. The old house which stood thirty or forty feet east of the street, was then taken down. Many of its timbers were very large and sound, it having been built when the whole town was a forest, and wood plenty. Mr. Brown, in 1774, erected the elegant house owned and occupied by the Providence Bank."

Immediately on his arrival, young Howland repaired to the residence of Mr. Gladding, on Weybosset street, opposite Whitman's block, and entered at once upon his new occupation. To a youth of his inquiring turn, a more favorable situation than Mr. Gladding's shop could hardly have been selected. Receiving the patronage of the most intelligent and influential citizens, it became in effect a literary and political exchange. Here, both before and after the commencement of the revolution, were discussed the prospects of the country and the current events of the day, and the sharp-eared and all-grasping boy while attending to his duties was receiving instruction from the most mature minds. By their conversation he was made familiar with the personal traits of the ruling spirits of the revolutionary period, as well as with the causes which led to the establishment of a Federal government.

In accordance with a custom then prevalent but now obsolete, the services of the young apprentice were required at the house a portion of each morning and evening. Fires were to be made, wood was to be cut, and water to be brought. The last named appears to have been the heaviest labor,

and to have made the most lasting impression. He says, "the water in all the wells between where the Arcade now stands and the great bridge was brackish, and the water for tea and washing was brought from the east side of the river from a pump on the Fenner estate, north of the "granite block" and the old "Coffee House." Some of the families had rain water cisterns for their chief supply; but these were few, and it fell to the lot of the boys, some of whom were negroes, for slavery was then in fashion, to go with two pails and a hoop, across the bridge for a supply. This was the hardest service I had yet experienced. There were so many families to be supplied, that we frequently met four or five boys at the pump at the same time, and we proceeded in procession with our pails across the bridge. On the evening before washing-day the process was so often repeated that the labor was exhausting. I ~~was~~ one of the smallest boys, and never very stout; and while I am writing this, I seem to feel the same stretch of the joints of the elbows and shoulders, and sympathy in the back, which I then experienced. The next year, 1771, the water-logs were laid from Field's fountain to Weybosset bridge, to the great joy of all the boys on Weybosset Point. A few years after, as more buildings began to be erected, a contract was made with Amos Atwell to sink a fountain near Rawson's tanyard, and lay the pipes through a narrow valley, to a place where Aborn street now is. These pipes were after extended to the old long wharf."

The boys with whom he formed an acquaintance were not all free from exceptionable tendencies, and occasionally a few rude spirits would carry their sports beyond the limits of propriety. Though he disapproved of their conduct, and refused to take part with them, he was not always exempted from the consequences of association. "My first introduction to one man," he says, "soon after I came to Providence, was under circumstances calculated to leave a strong impression. It was a moonlight evening, and a number of boys were playing in front of his house, on Weybosset street. As I was a stranger to most of the boys, I did not join in the play, but stood with my back against the house near the door. Pretty soon, one of the boys threw a heavy substance against the door, which made considerable noise; upon this they all ran to the other side of the street. The owner immediately opened the door to see what was to pay. As I had not participated in the act, and felt no guilt, I stood still where I was. Finding that the boys had disappeared, and seeing me standing still, he came quickly out of the house, seized me by the shoulder, boxed my ears, and gave me a severe shaking. Though I was not to blame, I remembered the story of Tray, and said nothing.

"My next interview with him was at his shop. The boys were afraid to go in when he was there, and never attempted to in the day time. But as he did not usually go to the shop in the evening, his son used to let us come in after we had been playing in the cold, and stand around the stove.—One evening, as we were warming ourselves, and

talking with his son and a negro servant, who should come in but the old gentleman. As soon as I saw him I began to tremble. "Well, boys," said he sternly, "what do you want here?" "Nothing, sir," we replied. "Well, then," said he, opening the door at the same moment, "out with you, out with you;" and out we went, glad to get off so. I suppose he did not know me then, or when he boxed my ears, from the other boys. Some years later I became quite intimate with both father and son, and after I set up in business they were among my customers."

But the long winter evenings were not wholly devoted to play. Many of them were spent in reading books of biography, travels and history, or in adding to his limited knowledge of arithmetic. Sometimes books and the slate were laid aside, and themes for composition were meditated. These were, perhaps, the hardest of his exercises, and required the most patience and persistence to bring to a satisfactory termination. He did not confine himself simply to Franklin's process for young beginners of recasting in his own language the thoughts of authors he had read, and then restoring them to their original dress, but sometimes took for his subject a story to which he had listened, and wrote down the exact words of the narrator. One of his earliest efforts in this way was of an amusing character, though not suited for promiscuous inspection. Two maiden sisters, residing in his master's family, now and then enlivened an evening with a repetition of town gossip, and practices conflicting with the exalted standard of the gospel,

were commented on with somewhat indignant emphasis. The presence of the studious boy, who, though attentive to every word, appeared by the intentness of his gaze upon the fire, to be solving some problem of caloric, imposed no restraint on their conversation. Judge, then, their surprise, when at the annual "spring cleaning," they discovered a bundle of manuscripts recording their opinions of the peculiarities and foibles of a numerous circle! The proverb of the pitcher had here an ample illustration, and the hint was not disregarded. The tell-tale papers were committed to the flames, and the apprentice was never after made the involuntary depository of family secrets. As he grew older, and gained experience in the use of the pen, he found little difficulty in giving form to the creations of his own mind.

In the course of the first year of his apprenticeship a circumstance occurred, which, though seemingly trivial, had an important influence not only in fixing permanently his denominational relations, but in turning the current of religious thought into a new channel. The incident is given in his own words:

"Our family attended at Mr. Snow's meeting, as Mr. Gladding's father-in-law was a prominent member of that society. The first two or three Sundays I sat in a pew in the gallery back of the singers' seat. Mr. Joseph Martin sat not far distant holding a long heavy walnut cane, with which to keep the peace among the boys. There were four or five boys in the pew who were strangers to me. My place was in the front corner nearest to Mr. Martin. Soon after the sermon commenced, one of

the boys took a handful of chestnuts from his pocket, and one of them who sat opposite struck his hand and scattered them over the floor. Then began a scramble which made considerable noise. I did not move, but sat upright in my place. Mr. Martin hearing the noise rose up, and seeing no head but mine, with his heavy cane let fall a rather severe blow upon it, at the same instant saying with a strong voice, "be still there." I had no hand in the scramble or the noise. I only rubbed the bruised place, and concluded not to be there the next Sunday. From that time I went to Mr. Rowland's meeting in what is now called the old town house; and in that society have continued to worship to the present time, except about one year in war time when we had no minister, when I attended Mr. Manning's Baptist church, and occasionally Mr. Snow's. Thus had it not been for that handful of chestnuts, I might have remained on the west side; but for many years I have been thankful for the use of Mr. Martin's cane."

Of the provision made for public worship, certain domestic customs of the times, and other local matters, Mr. Howland thus writes:

"When I came to Providence there were five religious societies here. One was the old Arminian Baptist. Their meeting house was about forty feet square, and stood on the lot now forming the corner of North Main and Smith streets. At high water the tide flowed nearly up to the west end of the building. There were no pews. From the front door opening on Main street, an aisle extended to the pulpit which was raised three or four steps from the floor. On each side of the aisle benches extended north and south to the walls of the house, and there were benches in the gallery, which was entered by narrow stairs from a door on the south side of the house. It appears that it never had been the practice to settle an ordained minister over any particular church or society. In this they re-

sembled the Quakers. As settlements extended into the country, and other places had been procured where the neighbors could attend, one of the elders nearest the place usually preached. The elders were generally farmers, and had no salary or any other means of support but their own labor. They officiated in any place where there was a gathering, and the people did not know who was to speak till they saw one begin. They did not approve of singing, and never practised it in public worship. When more than one elder was present and the first had exhausted himself, he would say, "there is time and space left if any one has further to offer." In that case another and another would offer what he had to say; so there was no set time for closing the meeting. As elder Winsor's home was in Providence, he generally appeared in his place every Sunday, so that this came to be called elder Winsor's meeting. The house could not contain a large congregation, nor did the number present seem to require a larger house as they were not crowded, though many of them came in from the neighboring towns on horseback with women behind them on pillions.

"The old Episcopal church called King's church, which was built of wood, stood where St. John's church now stands. The Rev. John Graves, a missionary from the board in England, was the faithful pastor of this church, and died at a very advanced age, after the close of the revolution. The next meetinghouse south was that of the Quakers. The next on the east side of the river was that of the First Congregational Society, of which the Rev. David S. Rowland was the pastor. Some years after, on the society erecting another house, the old one, built in 1723, was purchased by the town. The only house of worship on the west side of the river was Mr. Snow's, which was called the New Light meeting house, as Mr. Snow with a number of others had separated from the First Congregation in what was called the New Light times, and styled

themselves Separates and New Lights. This house stood on the site of the present large brick church.

"In 1771, there were but four houses on the south side of Westminster street, above Whitman's corner, and one on the north side, which was built by Mr. Asa Franklin. This was the first house built on firm ground, as all the space east of it to the corner on which the Exchange Bank now stands, was a salt marsh covered at high tide with water.

"In those days there was no ground meal sold in town except what was retailed by Mr. Thurber, on Constitution hill, who owned a mill up the river; and flour was used in families only when company was expected to tea. In that case, a cake was made and baked on a pewter plate before the fire. This was a great circumstance. Liverpool ware had not then been imported. A few red earthen dishes only were made in this country. Pewter was used in every family. Cast iron baking pans or kettles with covers had not been known in New England, and the first seen here was one brought from New Jersey by President Manning. On Mrs. Manning's recommendation they were gradually introduced, and flour biscuit began to be baked in families. People generally bought indian corn or rye in the grain and sent it in wheel barrows to the old grist mill near the mill bridge, till old Mr. Searle, the sexton of Mr. Snow's meeting, was able to purchase a horse and cart in which he took his neighbor's bags to the mill, and returned with the meal at three coppers a bag. This was a great improvement in the state of society. The pavements extended up town to the Quaker yard, down town to the old Crawford house, and on the west side to Dorrance street, then called Muddy Dock.

"From the time that settlements were made in Johnston and Cranston, tradition reports that a ferry was kept up from a wharf on the east shore to Weybosset Point on the west. In 1711, a resolution passed the General Assembly

appointing Daniel Abbot to repair to the adjoining provinces of Massachusetts and Connecticut, and represent to the people of those governments, the necessity of three bridges; one to cross the Pawtucket river, one at Weybosset in Providence, and the other to cross Pawtuxet river. The propriety of these three bridges being erected, is stated to be that these passes are on the great highway between Massachusetts and Connecticut, and that the people of these two governments will be accommodated by them equally with the inhabitants of our colony. Mr. Abbot was therefore directed to call upon such persons as were willing to contribute towards raising a sum sufficient for the purpose. We can find no report of Abbot's mission or of any money obtained in his journies. It would appear to have been a hopeless case, and if he collected sufficient to defray his expenses, he must have been fortunate, as he could expect no compensation from those who appointed him to this service.

"It may be here noted, that Daniel Abbot was the proprietor of the land fronting on Market square, extending north and south of Franklin Hall. Whether there ever had been a bridge at Weybosset before this appointment of Abbot is uncertain. That there had been subscriptions to raise money for this purpose, there is no doubt; but it is beyond question, that by the aid of the General Assembly a bridge was built in 1711, and it is said that three bridges in this place, since that time, have been swept away by storms. For many years the only road from Boston and the Plymouth colony, lay through Providence, Pawtuxet, Greenwich and Westerly, and passed over Pawcatuck river to New London. Although the first emigrants commenced the settlement in this town in 1636, and the settlements on Connecticut river began the same year, yet there was no road between Providence and Connecticut other than the one mentioned by the sea side, for eighty-six years after. There may have been a foot path

through the wilderness, but the first team that ever came to Providence from Connecticut, arrived here on the twenty-ninth day of September, 1722. There were then two small warehouses in the town, which were sufficient to contain the merchandize brought to this market in the coasting craft.

"The frequent calls on the General Assembly for repairs of bridges on the great colony road, at length induced the towns which had no bridge of this class, to obtain a law to be passed that each town should maintain its own bridges as well as the highways, and that the distinction of colony roads and town roads should cease. Before the first bridge was erected to connect the east with the west side of the river, the projection of Weybosset Point, with the high hill with which it was crowned, had the effect to press the current of water to the east shore, which there formed a curve in which the tide flowed to what is now the west side of Main street, and the whole space between the granite block on the north side of Market square, and the south side of the Market house, was covered by the tide water. On the erection of the bridge, the space north of the Market house was filled out with earth, to save the expense of building a bridge of such extreme length, leaving a deep dock on the south. Preparatory to building the Market house, which was completed in 1773, this dock was filled up, and the Market house now covers most of the space. This filling up still left sufficient space for the river between the opposite shores, as the old bridge was of much greater length than the present one.

"It had pleased the author of all good to favor this settlement with a noble river of sufficient depth and breadth for the future navigation and commerce of a great city ; but the folly of the men of the former generation in divesting themselves of this munificent privilege, will be conspicuous in all future time. When the fever or infatuation began of filling up the noble river which connects Provi-

dence with the ocean, there was one individual here who had wisdom and courage enough to protest against it. He declared that one acre of this water was worth more than a thousand acres of land; that the length and breadth of the continent contained land sufficient for all the buildings that ever would be erected. But his protestations were of no avail. Carts and scows were employed to fill up the river to make more land. When this wharfing out, as it is called, began, the word channel was construed to mean the deepest part of the river instead of the whole space covered by the tide, as was understood by the original proprietors, from the days of Addison and Dean Swift down to the last efforts of Noah Webster and Abner Alden. If the English language has not been improved, it has altered and changed, and each individual, where his interest is concerned, assumes a full latitude of construction.

"The first great obstruction to the passage of the water in our river, was the old long wharf on the west side. Those on the east followed of course, till the original breadth of the river has been narrowed down to a strip scarcely wide enough for two sloops to pass. Shoals and shell beds have increased to obstruct even this narrow span, and the time will not be very distant when no loaded ship will appear above Field's Point. The merchants of Providence will then be compelled, in imitation of the Emperor of Russia and the merchants of St. Petersburg, to build a Cronstadt between Field's Point and Pawtuxet. The first square rigged vessel with a full cargo that ever took her departure from this port, sailed from the channel between Mill and Smith's bridges. Such a ship must now, even at high water, take her departure from Fox Point."

CHAPTER II.

IN the hostile demonstrations preceding the war of the revolution, Providence largely partook. Of many of these, young Howland was personally cognizant; while the daily reports from abroad discussed in his master's shop, made him acquainted with what had transpired elsewhere. In June, 1772, occurred what has been denominated "the second act of popular violence to the British crown," viz. the capture and destruction, in Narragansett bay, of the Gaspee, commanded by Lieutenant William Duddington. The account of this affair, and also of other occurrences including the capture of the Pigot galley and the King George, by Talbot, Mr. Howland thus narrates:

"The Gaspee armed schooner, commanded by Lieutenant Duddington, who had long vexed and troubled coasters and other vessels entering the port of Providence, under pretence of searching for contraband goods, chased a New York packet, commanded by Capt. Benjamin Lindsey, up the river. Lindsey was a better pilot than Duddington, and passed Namquit Point so near that the Gaspee in following him grounded, and as it was high water and the tide leaving him, he stuck fast. When Lindsey arrived with the news, a muster was made, and somebody set Daniel Pearce, a boy who had a drum, to beating through the street, and proclaiming that the Gaspee

was ashore high and dry below Pawtuxet. Before dark eight boats were manned, and Abraham Whipple appointed commander. We boys took another boat, and choose Ben Hammond for our captain. He was a fear-nothing fellow, with a lock of knotty red hair standing through the crown of his hat.

"Being in the bow of the boat, I had orders from captain Hammond to cast off the painter and shove off the bow. The first I had performed, and when in the act of doing the second, Mr. Gladding, who at that moment had arrived to look for his boy, seized me by the wrist and pulled me on to the wharf, saying, 'you sha'nt go with those fellows to get your head broke.' Thus I have no part in the boast of being of the Gaspee party, which the July orators say was the first act of the revolutionary struggle.

"Governor Wanton, as his duty required, issued a proclamation, offering one hundred pounds sterling for the discovery of the perpetrators of this deed, and when admiral Montagu had sent an account of the transaction to England, a proclamation of the King and Council came over, offering a reward of one thousand pounds for the discovery of the commander of the party, and five hundred pounds for any others concerned. A high commissioned court, as it was called, assembled at Newport, to receive complaints, with authority to send the persons charged to England for trial. The admiral brought his fleet round from Boston, and lay in the harbor to protect the court, and also to receive the persons accused on board to be sent to the mother country for the purpose above named.

"The King's proclamation was posted on the pillar of the hay scales, which then stood near the north east corner of the Market house. It had not been there more than fifteen or twenty minutes, when Mr. Joseph Aplin, a distinguished lawyer, came up to see what had collected the crowd. Lifting his cane he struck it down, and it soon

mingled with the filth of the street. This patriotic act, though he gave no reason for it at the time, was prompted by his regard for the safety of his fellow citizens. It is an honorable testimony to the character of the people of this town and State, that the Court with this bounteous reward, could get no person to inform, though all engaged were well known."

"In 1773, three ships loaded with tea arrived in Boston. The tea was subject to a duty of three pence sterling per pound, and for this reason the people would not suffer it to be landed, and the Custom House would not clear out the ships on a return passage till the cargoes had been landed. *We the people* assembled, boarded the ships, and emptied the tea into the harbor.

"In consequence of this transaction, the act called the Boston Port Bill was passed, which took place June, 1774. No vessel under this act could enter the harbor of Boston. The trade and business of the place of course was at an end, and hundreds of the inhabitants had to leave the town to seek a living elsewhere. Many of the mechanics and merchants came to this town, and a number of the carpenters and masons were employed to work on the First Baptist meeting house, which was then building. One of them, Mr. Sumner, was the chief engineer in erecting the high steeple of that house which has been much admired, and yet stands firm, though it quivered and trembled in the great September gale. Two others of the house carpenters who came from Boston, Crain and Stevens, were employed by Clark and Nightingale, till the Lexington battle in 1775, when Crain was by our General Assembly appointed captain with the rank of major, of a company of artillery raised by this state, and Stevens was his lieutenant. The reason of their being selected was that they had both belonged to Paddock's independent company of artillery in Boston, and understood the use of cannon. The next year Massachusetts raised a regiment of artillery,

commanded by Henry Knox, and as Crain and Stevens were of that State, he had them appointed to his regiment, and long before the close of the war they both arose to be colonels. Crain commanded a regiment of Massachusetts, and Stevens a regiment of New York line, to the end of the war, with great credit. When peace took place, Stevens settled in New York, and finally rose to be general and commander in chief of all the artillery in that State. Crain settled in Maine, and went into the lumber business. This is the history of three of the house carpenters who came from Boston on account of the Port Bill. The fourth is John Spurr. He worked at his trade here till he was appointed captain in the regiment raised in this county after the Lexington battle. He attained the rank of major in the Massachusetts line. He settled in Providence, and lived to an advanced age with the just reputation of one of our best citizens.

“The effect of the Boston Port Bill was to draw the attention of the people in the several colonies to the importance of a union, by which they might act in concert. The measures in operation against Massachusetts were deemed the common cause, in which all the colonies were equally interested. The town of Providence on the 17th of May, 1774, passed the following resolution :

“That the deputies of this town be requested to use their influence at the approaching session of the General Assembly of this colony, for promoting a Congress as soon as may be, of the representatives of the General Assemblies of the several colonies and provinces of North America, for establishing the firmest union, and adopting such measures as to them shall appear the most effectual to answer the important purpose, and to agree upon proper methods for executing the same.”

“This resolution, when we consider that it was passed even before the Port Bill went into operation, places the character and conduct of this town in a light most conspicuous and honorable. It was one of the first of so decided a character on the continent; and from this, and others which followed in the other colonies, we see the

first plan and motion which resulted in the union of the thirteen States, and finally in the establishment of the constitution and government which now extends from the eastern shore to the western ocean.

"The General Assembly in the session after the passage of these resolutions, appointed Stephen Hopkins and Samuel Ward delegates to the first Congress, which assembled at Philadelphia in September following.

"On the afternoon of the 19th of April, 1775, news arrived here that a battle was then going on, as the regulars had marched from Boston into the country. There were four or five boys of us on Mr. Thompson's wharf, where some hands were unloading a scow load of salt. Mr. Thompson came down and said, "war, war, boys, there is war. The regulars have marched out of Boston; a great many men killed; war, war, boys." He turned quickly and went up to the street. We all followed, and saw the officers of the companies and many others on the parade before Gov. Bowen's, seeking intelligence. The drums of the four independent companies beat, and the men paraded as soon as possible. It was sundown, and the officers of the company repaired to Lieut. Gov. Sessions, requesting him to give them orders to march towards Boston, as without his orders their authority would cease when they should have passed Pawtucket bridge. He declined doing any thing in the case, having no power out of the colony, or in it, as the Governor who lived in Newport was above him in authority. It was then concluded to send an express towards Boston, to know whether the enemy had returned or were yet in the field, and to act or march on further intelligence, orders or no orders. Mr. Charles Dabney, a member of the Cadet company, offered to be the express. A horse was procured and he set off. It was toward noon the next day before he returned, but an express from near the scene of action arrived, stating that the regulars were safe cooped up in Boston. Before this

intelligence arrived here, early in the morning Col. Varnum, with his Greenwich company arrived, but would not stay. They continued their march some miles beyond Pawtucket, when receiving the intelligence they returned here. I viewed the company as they marched up the street, and observed Nathaniel Greene with his musket on his shoulder, in the ranks as a private. I distinguished Mr. Greene, whom I had frequently seen, by the motion of his shoulders in the march, as one of his legs was shorter than the other. This private in Varnum's company was afterward celebrated as the commander-in-chief of the southern army.

"The battle of Lexington took place on the day of our April town meeting for the choice of governor, deputy governor, &c. The gentlemen who had served several preceding years were elected without opposition. Our General Assembly convened on Saturday, the 22d, on account of the intelligence of the battle. This was the house of the last year, as those recently chosen did not come into power till the first Wednesday in May following. Under the excitement of the battle, which had taken place on the Wednesday preceding, the Assembly resolved to raise three regiments of infantry and one company of artillery for the defence of the country, thus making a common cause with Massachusetts.

"The governor and deputy governor, with two members of the lower house, protested against raising these troops, but the act passed notwithstanding. The dissent of these gentlemen did not emanate from disaffection to the American cause, but they dreaded placing the issue on the battle field against an enemy so powerful. The first Wednesday in May soon arrived. The officers appointed to command the troops would not act without commissions, and the governor would not sign or issue them, although they purported to be issued in his majesty's name. Extraordinary cases require extraordinary remedies. The secretary,

Henry Ward, was directed to sign and issue the commissions. It was important that there should be a chief executive magistrate—the legislature having declared the office of governor vacant. The deputy governor declined taking his engagements and resigned. It was therefore decided for the Assembly to elect a deputy governor, with the powers of a commission in chief. Where was the proper person to be found, with abilities and fortitude sufficient for the exigencies of the times? His life and fortune must be pledged on the issue. Victory—complete victory on our part, there must be, or the life of the man who should take the office, would be the forfeit. Should we prove unequal to the contest now begun, subordinate men might be spared, but the chief of the rebels must suffer. Fortunately, a man every way qualified was determined on, a citizen who never aspired to public life even in times of safety.

“Nicholas Cooke, of Providence, was the man unanimously agreed on. The question was, could he be persuaded to accept the position? Stephen Hopkins, then preparing for his journey to take his seat in Congress, and Joshua Babcock, the oldest member of the house, were requested to wait on him, and if possible to obtain his consent. Both houses were waiting in anxious solicitude for the return of their messengers. They stated the urgency of the case. Mr. Cooke pleaded his advanced age, and the retired habits which unfitted him for meeting the expectations of the Assembly. They replied that they considered his duty required him to enable them to make a favorable report. He finally consented, though nothing but the critical state of the country would have induced him so to do. The appointment of Gov. Cooke was received with joy throughout the State. With a solid judgment, and an ardent and just sense of the goodness of the American cause, he was a man of great decision of character. This the peculiar circumstances of the times re-

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quired. He seemed to rise with the spirit of the day, and brought into action abilities and strength of mind which in private life would perhaps never have been duly appreciated. Times of difficulty and danger have in various instances brought on the stage, men who seemed born for the occasion. We cannot tell what another man might have done, but the three years that Gov. Cooke presided in the public councils, directed the military operations and furnished the supplies for the troops, not only in this department, but under the immediate command of General Washington, his correspondence with Congress, with the commander-in-chief, with the councils or governors of the neighboring States, reflect high honor on the State, and Rhode Island history, if faithfully written, will hand his name down to posterity in connection with the most eminent public characters of which our country can boast.

“The principle assumed at the commencement of hostilities, was, that we were not at war with the King, but with his ministry; and in the papers of that day they never spoke of the King's troops, but uniformly styled them the ministerial troops; for we professed to be still his majesty's loyal subjects, to avoid being denominated rebels, and in expectation of an accommodation taking place by a repeal of the acts of Parliament of which we complained. Our people did not wish or expect that the contest would result in independence, but it was the general opinion that when the ministry found we would fight rather than submit, they would repeal the acts which were the subject of complaint; and nothing but the savage manner in which the British army and navy conducted the war, and the treatment of the prisoners who fell into their hands, finally brought us to the declaration of independence, and to seek the aid of foreign nations. I know that hundreds of newspaper writers, and hundreds more of July orators, have said that we fought for a republican government, and to obtain this was our principal aim. This I know is not

the fact. Until July, 1776, we neither fought for independence or republicanism. Even after the battle of Bunker Hill, when two battles had been fought, the Continental Congress in their last petition to the King, used these expressions: "We ask but for peace, liberty and safety. We wish not for any diminution of the prerogative, or the grant of any new right in our favor. Your royal authority over us we shall ever zealously support and maintain." This contradicts the hundred times reported assertion that we fought old England, in the beginning, for the purpose of establishing an independent government. It was the necessity of the case which compelled us to declare ourselves independent; and after the declaration was issued and proclaimed, it is also true that we fought to maintain and support it, till it was finally assented to and acknowledged by Great Britain.

"The most remarkable character of all the boys who grew up in Providence, was Silas Talbot. He served his apprenticeship with Zephaniah Andrews, as a mason.— When he was of age, he worked at his trade, and built a house for himself on the north side of Westminster street. When the three Rhode Island regiments were raised after the battle of Lexington, he received the commission of lieutenant. He rose soon to be a captain, then a major by brevet, by a special act of Congress. His brevet commission not attaching him to any regiment he was left free for any personal enterprise. He therefore collected a number of volunteers to perform with him a daring expedition in an old sloop which lay in Taunton river. He in a dark night passed down the east passage, and run alongside of and boarded the British Pigot galley, which lay near Fogland ferry. The officers and crew were compelled to surrender, and he carried her with the prisoners safe into Stonington or New London. Her cannon were 32 pounders. For this exploit he was by Congress appointed colonel, and the state presented him a silver hilt-

ed sword, which was manufactured by Mr. John Gibbs, our noted silversmith. During the command of General Gates in this department, Talbot fitted and manned the old sloop Argo, and under a new commission from the State authorized by Congress, performed several cruises and hard fought actions, and brought in several prizes. The name and title of colonel Talbot was so popular and in such general use, that when he commanded the Argo her officers and men could not easily drop it for that of captain. On one of his cruises he came up with a British transport ship, off Sandy Hook, and to the hail of the ship, "*Who commands that sloop?*" the Argo's officer answered, colonel Talbot. "The devil he does; 'tis the first time I ever saw a sloop commanded by a colonel," was the reply; but he was obliged to strike to the colonel, who brought him safe into New Bedford.

"Before the revolution, as Providence increased in population and commerce, an unreasonable prejudice existed in Newport against it, and when the war began the richest men of the old families there were generally loyalists. The case was different in Providence. Here there were none who took the side of the enemy. The great success of the little privateers of this town in the year 1776, which brought in a number of very valuable ships, increased the bitter feeling of the friends of the crown in Newport. When the British army had taken possession of the island, and the ships blocked up the river, Talbot in his Argo, ran through their fleet in a dark stormy night, and went to sea. His great success induced the loyalists in Newport with the aid of the British, to fit out a brig called the King George, to cruise for his capture. They fell in with each other between Nantucket and New York.

"Very early one morning, as I was passing towards the market house, there were but two men to be seen in the street, Doctor Ephraim Bowen and Mr. John Jenckes, who were two of the earliest risers in the town. They

were standing together in the middle of the street. As I was passing in the rear of them, General Gates opened the chamber window of his head quarters on the east side of the street, with his old velvet night cap on, and said, "good morning gentlemen." They both answered, "good morning General, good morning General." The General said, "we have good news." "Ah, what is it?" they both inquired. The General said with a strong voice, "Talbot has taken the King George." "Has he?" they said, with voices equally strong, at the same instant advancing nearer to the General's house. The General said, "I received a letter last night by express from Talbot. He has got her safe into New Bedford after a severe action." "That is good news indeed," they replied. I spread the news through the neighborhood, and to every passer-by, with great pleasure, as I heard it from the General himself. That day but little work was done. Joy was diffused through the town. People left their work to talk about it as much as if a great victory had been obtained by our army. Talbot and major Simeon Thayer were, without question, among the most efficient officers of the Rhode Island line of the army.

"There were at this time a great number of refugees here from Newport, many of whom had left the island before the enemy took possession, and many others who had been permitted to come off in flags of truce by the British generals. A number of these had been confined in the jail and on board the prison ships as rebels. This treatment some of them laid to the account of their tory fellow citizens, and their rancor vented itself more against the latter than against the regular troops, except towards General Prescott who was an ignorant tyrannical man, who would strike every one with his cane who did not take off his hat when he appeared in sight. These refugees rejoiced most heartily in the capture of the King George.

"I am not writing the history of the revolutionary war,

but have noticed several of the preceding circumstances to give the character of the times we have passed through. They were times of distress and trouble. The men most prominent and active in the affairs of the town, as well as in the public transactions of the times, when the dispute with the mother country commenced, were Stephen Hopkins, Samuel Nightingale, sen., Nicholas Cooke, three brothers Nicholas, Joseph and John Brown, Jabez Bowen, President Manning, Ebenezer Thompson, John Jenckes, John Smith, David Lawrence, Doctor Arnold, Amos Atwell, Zephaniah Andrews, John Updike, Nathaniel Greene, Theodore Foster, Paul Allen, Daniel Tillinghast, Joseph Nightingale, Elihu Robinson, and others. John Brown and Jabez Bowen were leaders in this phalanx. The elderly portion of these gentlemen generally wore large white wigs; those of the younger part wore their own hair. This may be considered the last age of the large wig fashion. The Quakers, who are generally the last to change fashions, wore wigs without powder."

On preceding pages mention is made of Governors Hopkins and Ward. Both of these gentlemen Mr. Howland numbered among his personal friends, and familiar with their public career he was qualified to estimate correctly their eminent services. In the following extract, that estimate of the former is briefly expressed:

"Stephen Hopkins was born in 1707. He for many years was Governor of the colony, and in the French war before the conquest of Canada, was a member of the convention which assembled at Albany under instructions from the King and Council, to decide on the number of men each of the colonies should furnish for the defence of the frontier, or for the invasion of Canada. As a civilian he was not inferior to any of the statesmen of his day.—His Rights of the Colonies Examined, which was publish-

ed by the General Assembly, and reprinted in England by the friends of America there, was laid before the British ministry by the agent of the colony. Gov. Hopkins was a member of the Congress of 1774, 1775, and 1776, in which he signed the declaration of independence. He left a large trunk of papers connected with the transactions of his public life. After his decease, an unsuccessful attempt was made by Moses Brown to obtain them for safe keeping, and in the great storm of September, 1815, the tide swept through the house where they were lodged, and they were carried off and lost in the multitude of waters. The name of Hopkins, or that of Ellery his colleague, who in behalf of this State signed the declaration of independence, ought not to sink into forgetfulness here, while they are remembered with feelings of veneration in other States."

The estimation in which Gov. Ward was held, will be gathered from the following letter addressed to a descendant:

PROVIDENCE, April 5th, 1842.

RICHARD R. WARD, ESQ.

Dear Sir :—The first meeting of our Board of Trustees since the receipt of your valuable communication, was holden yesterday, when I was requested to forward the annexed acknowledgment. The manuscript journal of your highly venerated ancestor is esteemed a most valuable document. To myself, personally, it is the source of grateful recollections, as when a young boy then living in Newport, I saw him on a day of his election escorted by a numerous procession, civil and military, to the Court House. I saw him afterwards on another occasion before his election to Congress, and distinctly recollect the countenance of one whom I then and ever since esteemed a great man. An examination or statement of the Rights of the Colonies, from the pen of Gov. Ward, as voted and adopted by the town of Westerly, where was his home-

stead, published in the Gazette of Providence, and the Mercury of Newport, was highly approved by the politicians of that day, when the contest with the mother country was carried on by votes, resolutions and protests, and which were afterwards changed to guns and bayonets. Your father, Col. Ward, was one of the best officers of the army of the revolution. I served under him in Sullivan's expedition on Rhode Island, and ever afterwards had the happiness to enjoy his confidence and friendship. I now feel myself as standing alone, a monument of departed years. The generations which existed in the days of Gov. Ward have long since departed. I am in the midst of a new people, but am pleased to find now and then one who, like yourself, feels an interest in the memory and times of their ancestors, and who do not limit the divine command, "honor thy father and thy mother," to the immediate ancestor, but extend it back to former progenitors.*

With great respect and regard,

Your humble servant,

JOHN HOWLAND.

* Gov. Ward, less fortunate than his distinguished associate, did not live to sign the declaration he had so strenuously advocated, but died at Philadelphia, in Congress, on the 25th day of March, 1776. His place was supplied by his warm personal and political friend, William Ellery, who thus had the honor, of which no man was more worthy, to affix his signature to the declaration in company with the illustrious Gov. Hopkins. For Gov. Ward Mr. Jefferson entertained a high regard. In an interview with two gentlemen from New York, in June, 1825, he adverted as associated with the name of Ward, to "the heroic State of Rhode Island," Roger Williams, and the devotion and energy of her people in behalf of religious and civil liberty. "Gov. Ward," said Mr. Jefferson, "had a long foresight. He was early possessed of the idea of independence, and was a wise counselor in discussion on the affairs of the colonies. He would assuredly have affixed his name to the declaration of independence had he but lived a few days longer. We all deeply regretted his death." Col. Samuel Ward of the Continental line of Rhode Island in the army of the revolution, son of Gov. Ward, was born at Westerly, R. I., Nov. 17, 1756, and died in the city of New York, Aug. 16, 1832. Samuel Ward, son of Col. Samuel, and partner in the firm of Prime, Ward & King, was born at Warwick, R. I., May 1, 1786, and died in the city of New York, Nov. 27th, 1839.

The most important event to young Howland in 1774, was the sudden decease of his father, by which he was deprived of a judicious and affectionate counsellor. It was a shadow upon the path of life neither fleeting nor unacknowledged, and hallowed by the memory of christian worth. The sad tidings were conveyed to him by his father's near relative, Mr. Edward Bosworth, of Barrington, who being in Newport at the time went to Providence for that purpose, and in whose company he went home to the funeral. Both Dr. Hopkins, of whose society his father was an active member, and Dr. Styles, pastor of the second church, were present and walked in the procession to the grave; but neither officiated at the house, it not being "the practice then as at present for a prayer or address to be offered at a funeral." Such omissions were not owing to indifference to the living, or to want of respect for the dead, but are to be ascribed, as some think, "to the early Puritan prejudices" against the ostentatious sepulchral rites of the Catholic church. It is a mark of progress, that since that day a more enlightened public sentiment has thrown off these trammels, and adopted a funeral custom in accordance with the simplicity and spirit of our holy religion, and the best sympathies of the human heart.

Before and after the commencement of hostilities, Rhode Island had an organized militia, known as "minute men." It comprised all able-bodied white male persons, between the ages of sixteen and sixty. To this body, by virtue of years, young

Howland belonged. His first essay at arms was in September, 1775, when the company to which he was attached, with others, marched to Newport to stop the depredations of captain James Wallace, on the south end of the island. He commanded the British fleet, and had been several times successful in driving off cattle and sheep for the supply of his majesty's troops. On reaching Newport, his company were "quartered in Banister's barn, and slept on the hay-mow." This seasonable demonstration prevented a repetition of seizures. In speaking of this affair, Mr. Howland says:

"I should not have alluded to it but to correct a mistake of Mr. Ross, in his discourse delivered in Newport April 4th, 1838, on the conclusion of the second century of the settlement of Rhode Island, page 38. He states that on the 7th of October, 1775, Wallace sailed up the river to Bristol, where he demanded three hundred sheep, &c. How far the demand for sheep may accord with truth I cannot say; but he goes on to say, 'that evening about 8 o'clock, Wallace commenced a heavy cannonade on the town, and Gov. Bradford's house, with several others, were burnt.' Mr. R. has here connected an expedition which was sent by General Pigot in the year 1779, and the one by Wallace in 1775. No houses were burnt by Wallace, as he did not land any men, but kept up a severe cannonade, and from his bomb brig threw several shells among the houses which did but little damage. Of this transaction I was a witness, as captain Tallman's company of minute men, to which I belonged, and captain Power's company, were stationed on the Dudley and Bannister farms, not far from Newport. I saw Wallace with his fleet when they got under way between Cost harbor and Gould island, and as he sailed slowly up the river we commenced our march in range with him. As it was our business to

attack any men he might attempt to land, we kept even pace with him till we arrived at Bristol ferry, when one of his fleet grounded on the extreme north west point of the island. Wallace with the rest of his squadron came too, waiting for the tide to rise to float the grounded one. Several of our minute men without any orders of the officers, ran across the meadow near as possible to the grounded vessel, and discharged their muskets at her. Wallace then brought two of his largest ships to bear upon them, and by repeated broadsides tore up the turf among them. They all began the retreat up hill to the road, and came tumbling over the stone wall among us. It was dark when the vessel floated, and Wallace stood with all his fleet for Bristol harbor. We stood on the high ground near the ferry, and saw the flash of his guns, which appeared to be mostly discharged in broadsides; but such was the state of the air we could hear none of the report though only four miles off. In Providence they were heard distinctly. Gov. Bradford, Simeon Potter, Benjamin Bosworth, and others, repaired to the head of the wharf to confer with Wallace, to induce him to cease his attack. He agreed for some sheep and oxen to be sent on board in the morning, which was complied with, and the fray was over."

CHAPTER III.

THE year 1776 opened with extraordinary interest to young Howland. The many alarms caused by the enemy, and the marauding propensities they manifested, the frequent parade and drill of soldiers, the arrival and departure of troops, and the earnest appeals to patriotism with which his ear had become familiar, furnished fuel for the fire already kindled in his youthful breast. Regardless of personal ease, he resolved to exchange the quiet routine of the shop for the perilous and exciting scenes of war. In January he enlisted in the seventh company, Capt David Dexter, of the regiment ordered to be raised for one year by the General Assembly, and soon after joined the forces at Newport. The events of the next thirteen months, to which he was witness, together with his personal experiences, we give in his own words :

“In the year 1776, this State had two regiments in the Continental army, one commanded by Col. Varnum and the other by Col. Hitchcock. They composed part of the army of General Washington on Long Island, as in the early part of that year the enemy had evacuated Boston, and were collecting their forces to attack New York. Our General Assembly ordered a regiment to be stationed in Newport, where the harbor was infested by fifteen or six-

teen sail of the British fleet, commanded by captain James Wallace. This squadron laid the town of Newport under contribution to supply them with provisions. They had burnt the houses on the island of Prudence, and carried off all the cattle. They kept both sides of the bay in continual alarm. The purpose of the State in raising the troops mentioned above, was principally to protect Newport and the shores of the island from these depredations. As many of our best customers in the shop had been appointed officers in the army, the business had declined, and as the new regiment then raising was to be stationed in my native town, where my mother and the rest of the family resided, I enlisted in it, and subscribed the engagement to be faithful to "the liberties of America," and to be obedient to all orders and regulations of the army. The terms of the enlistment were two months' pay in advance, and we were to find our own clothes. The paper money had not then depreciated. On receiving my two months' pay, of forty shillings per month, I immediately went to the shop of Joseph Rogers, who had ready-made shirts to sell, and bought one. Putting it on over my jacket, I went home to dinner. My singular appearance surprised Mrs. Gladding, and she wanted to know what it meant. I told her I had enlisted. Mr. Gladding did not find fault with me, but took it in good part.

"I was then in my nineteenth year. Col. Henry Babcock, who had been colonel of a Rhode Island regiment in the old French war at Lake George, was appointed to the command of our regiment. His father, Doctor Babcock, of Westerly, was a man of large property, and for many years had been a member of the General Assembly. His son, our colonel, had been well educated, and had the manners of an accomplished gentleman. In two or three months the Council of War dismissed him from the command, and appointed Col. Christopher Lippitt to succeed

him.* Orders were issued for the men, as fast as they were mustered and equipped, to repair to Newport, and on my receiving my gun and accoutrements I set off alone. When I arrived in Bristol, about one o'clock, I called at the house of Stephen Smith, who kept the only tavern there, and got dinner. While paying Mrs. Smith for the dinner, Mr. Smith came in in some agitation, and said Wallace was coming up the river with his whole fleet, and heading towards Poposquash. He said it was best to pack up some of the things. I inquired if there were any troops in town. He replied that captain Pearce had a company of thirty or forty men at the battery. I took my gun, and slung my knapsack, and travelled down the street, which by this time began to be thronged with people.—Some with carts and wheelbarrows, or baskets, loaded with their most necessary things, were removing out to places of safety. I saw Lieut. Governor Bradford, and five or six other gentlemen, standing on the highest part of the street, observing the progress of Wallace, who seemed to be standing towards the mouth of the harbor. I went up to the governor, and taking off my hat, told him I belonged to Babcock's regiment, and according to order was bound to Newport, but as Wallace appeared to be coming up to the town, I should be glad if he would give me orders to join captain Pearce's company, as I wished, if the town was to be defended, to take a part; otherwise I must pro-

* "Col. Lippitt was descended from an ancient and very respectable family in this State, and had for himself acquired a high standing at the time of his appointment to the command of a regiment. He was a brave and energetic officer, prompt in the execution of all orders, and prudent in his movements, and highly commended by the commander-in-chief. After the time for which his regiment was raised had expired, Col. Lippitt returned to his farm in Cranston, and was for several years returned a deputy to the General Assembly from that town. In 1780, he was appointed a Brigadier General of militia, and commanded a brigade on Rhode Island at the time the French troops under Rochambeau were stationed near Newport. He died Jan. 18th, 1824."—*Judge Cowell's Spirit of '76*.

ceed to Newport. He replied, "that's right, my good lad; go and join captain Pearce at the battery, and I will see it's all right." I put on my hat, and travelled quick step to the mud battery, and told captain Pearce my story, and that I wished to join his company. He readily directed me to fall in. This battery was near the water's edge, about west from the old Episcopal church.

"The breast-work was of a height that standing on tip-toe we could rest our pieces on the top, and take aim at the men or officers on the deck of a ship. This we expected soon to do, but when the leading vessel arrived opposite the mouth of the harbor, she altered her course, and passing the point of Popposquash, stood towards Warwick Neck. The rest of the fleet followed, and Bristol was out of danger. I then told captain Pearce that as the enemy appeared to be standing up towards Pawtuxet, if he would dismiss me I would proceed on my way to Newport. He assented, and I went to Bristol ferry. I lodged that night at the ferry house on the Rhode Island side. The next day I reported myself at head quarters at the Banister house.

"There was a small regiment of State troops, commanded by Col. William Richmond, of Little Compton, and a company of artillery, stationed on the island when our regiment was formed, and in the spring of the year we were all marched into town and quartered on the point north of long wharf. These troops were formed into a brigade, and William Barton, who kept a hatter's shop in Providence, was appointed brigade major. On his arrival at Newport he took up his quarters with Col. Richmond, and entered on the duties of his office.

"Congress having authorized or requested the States to issue letters of marque and reprisal, this summer a number of privateers were equipped from Providence, which made very successful cruises. Captain William Chase, Daniel Bucklin, Crawford and others, brought in

several large ships taken from the homeward bound West India fleets. The British ministry, expecting to crush the rebellion in the colonies by the great numbers in their armies, and of sweeping our shipping from the ocean, did not anticipate any powerful counteraction on our part. They did not provide sufficient convoys for their shipping, and our little privateers, which mounted only a few small cannon, cruised in the latitudes in which they knew their ships would pass, generally boarded them without opposition, and the wharves in Providence were lined two or three deep with the largest ships from Jamacia, for which they had not to fire so much as a musket. The next year experience taught the British to arm their merchant ships, and fighting came in fashion.

“Early in the month of July, I do not now recollect the day, the declaration of independence arrived from Philadelphia. This was what few expected and no one wished to be the result when the contest began, but now it was an act of necessity. The General Assembly was convened at Newport, the old seat of government, and they ordered it to be publicly proclaimed and celebrated. For this purpose our troops were paraded on the north side of the Court House parade, in thirteen divisions, and ensign John Handy, adjutant of Richmond's regiment, read the declaration from the gallery in front, over the Court House steps. Probably the assignment of this duty to young Handy by the Assembly was to induce other young men of Newport, whose fathers were mostly loyalists, to join in the good cause, and being an officer dressed in a handsome uniform (as well as being a good reader,) to reconcile the military part of the audience to the declaration. When the reading was finished, the thirteen platoons in succession fired, then thirteen discharges of cannon, and then three cheers with the swinging of our old three cornered hats. Some few days after, the same was proclaimed in Providence, by order of the Governor or

Assembly, with the addition of a dinner at Hacker's Hall, and the pulling down of the sign of the Crown Coffee House.*

"It now became necessary to change words and names. The building which from time immemorial had been called the Court House, was now the State House. The Colony of Rhode Island was now the State of Rhode Island. The United Colonies were now the United States. The Governor instead of his Honor was now his Excellency. The sheriff or his deputy was no longer a King's but a State officer, though Joseph Lawrence who had lived through the reign of two or three Kings, could not adopt the new designation. When he and other owners of a privateer procured a warrant to arrest Paul Jones for impressing the crew of their vessel, and proceeded in company with the sheriff, to arrest him at the corner of the Jenckes house in Providence, Jones who was a captain in our navy, drew his long sword and swore he would clip any man who dared approach him. Lawrence said, 'oppose that man if you dare. He is a King's officer.' Jones instantly advanced a step towards the sheriff, with a flourish of his bright sword, and said, 'is he? By—I have a commission then to take his head off.' The sheriff drew quickly back and said, 'he lies, he lies, I a'nt a King's officer.' Lawrence turning to the sheriff, said, 'why don't you take him?' Mr. sheriff replied, 'the devil—don't you see his poker?' Jones escaped.

"Our regiment was ordered to leave Newport, and join the army at New York. On this occasion our officers received commissions from the President of Congress in

* The declaration of independence was read from the portico of the State House in Providence, by George Brown, an Englishman, who was selected to perform the service on account of the compass of his voice. He was then upwards of eighty years old, yet so firm and clear was his utterance, that he was distinctly heard by the crowd on North Main street. Mr. Brown was distinguished for benevolence, ready wit and integrity. He died at East Greenwich in March, 1783, and was interred in Providence.

lieu of those signed by the Governor; but the non-commissioned and privates marched under the original enlistments. Some went by water and some by land to New London. Colonel Lippitt chose to visit his family on his way, who lived on his farm in Cranston, and as I had the care of his baggage, and was particularly favored by him, we crossed the bay to Wickford, and from thence proceeded to his house. After remaining there one night, we continued our journey through Plainfield to join the regiment at New London. We lodged the first night at Eaton's tavern, in Plainfield, and there we met admiral Hopkins, who was on his way home from Philadelphia. He appeared greatly excited when he informed colonel Lippitt that General Washington had abandoned the city of New York without fighting to defend it. He censured him severely for so doing. The loss of New York doubtless affected colonel Lippitt, as it did everybody else, but he would not blame the commander-in-chief, nor join the admiral in his bitter censures. This was the first time I had ever heard man or woman blame, or speak disrespectfully of General Washington, and I may add, that it was also the last; but it did not alter my opinion of the wisdom, the bravery, or the prudence of the illustrious general to whose discretion and judgment I was now going to submit my life as well as the liberties of my country.

"The next morning we went on our way to New London, where we embarked on board a schooner to proceed up the sound. We were so crowded on board, that there was no room to sit or lie down. We stood both below as well as above deck wedged together. The colonel did not go on board with us, but went by land on horseback. Before night there arose a strong gale of wind ahead, and from the spray of the sea and force of the wind and waves we had no shelter till some time in the night, when we arrived under the lee of a small island, where we lay till morning, when we got under way and before the next night ar-

rived at Black Rock. There we landed, and after loading our tents and camp kettles in carts, proceeded on to New Haven, and thence to Fairfield. Here we waited for the men and the baggage carts to come on. It was Sunday, and before the afternoon meeting I went up to the top of the tower, which was covered with a thick sheet of lead. In this I cut my name, and the date of my visit, expecting that it might be read some years after by some strange antiquarian ascending to the height I had reached. I attended worship in the same house in the afternoon. The Rev. Mr. Elliot was the minister. He was brother to Doctor Elliot of Boston. This being a gloomy period of the war, the disasters and distress we were suffering he attributed to the sins of the people, and said that we could not expect better times till repentance and reformation took place. This I esteemed discouraging, as we witnessed little of religious reformation since the war began, and considering that war never fails to produce immorality. Mr. Elliot was a man of talents and an able preacher, but his doctrine was derived from the divine government as relating to the Hebrew nation, whose reformation never took place except in consequence of public calamities.— But these have seldom, if ever, been the result respecting other nations. The next day we proceeded on our way towards King's bridge, which connects the Manhattan island with the main. After we left the Connecticut boundary, and arrived in Westchester county in New York State, there appeared a vast difference both in the manners of the people, the roads, the buildings, and the cultivation of the land. All the advantages in these respects were in favor of the land we had left. The ignorance and poverty of the people increased the farther we advanced into the State of New York, which showed that the first settlers were of a different origin from those of New England.

“ We passed King's bridge, which is fifteen miles from

the south end of the city, and encamped near the eleven mile stone. I do not recollect that there was a single dwelling house between our camp and the bridge. The main road which led from the city to the country, was not fenced on either side. The land appeared a barren wilderness, hilly and rocky. The village of Harlem, south of our camp, was an old Dutch settlement, and it was said the land was well cultivated. There, the enemy had possession, and our piquet guards were in its near neighborhood. The day after our troops left New York, a severe action took place between a detachment of our army and one regiment of British light infantry, one of Highlanders, and a regiment of Hessians. The enemy were repulsed with the loss of about one hundred men on their part, but left colonel Knowlton, who commanded the American detachment, mortally wounded on the field. This partial success, it was said, raised the spirits of our men, which had been depressed by the losses before sustained. But this took place before our regiment arrived in the camp. I one day travelled down as far as the lower line of our piquets, near the nine mile stone, which marked the distance from New York; and this was the highest approach to that city I made during the revolution.

“It was most fortunate for the American cause that the British ministry appointed two such superannuated generals as Howe and Sir Henry Clinton, to command their armies. When General Washington evacuated New York, the British force by frequent arrivals from Europe, amounted to thirty-five thousand men, besides nearly or quite an hundred ships of war. With this large force of soldiers and marines, they ought to have swept the whole of the American army off the island the very day after they had left the city. But Howe and Clinton had both witnessed the battle of Bunker Hill, and Burgoyne had from Fort Hill seen the killed and wounded brought over to Boston, and it seemed that the transactions of that day

had never escaped from their minds. Lord Percy, though of the Hotspur race, was never made for a general, and after he and Clinton had taken possession of Rhode Island without opposition, he resigned his command and returned to England.

“It was on the 15th of September that the British took possession of New York, and we were in possession of the north part of the island from Harlem to King’s bridge, till the 16th of October following. During the greater part of this time, from bad fare, hard service, and sleeping on the ground, many of our men became sick of what was called the camp distemper, which seizing the bowels soon became fatal. This daily lessened our numbers, and rendered others unfit for duty. When our regiment was ordered to march to Westchester, our sick were placed in wagons with as much care as circumstances would permit. Young Otis Dexter, a fine boy of fourteen years, the brother of captain David Dexter, and who was the fifer of our own company, we placed in a wagon on some straw, and he expired about the time we crossed King’s bridge. The jolting of the wagon over an uneven and stony road doubtless hastened his exit, and finally ended his sufferings. Early the next morning, we made his grave in the corner of an orchard in Westchester, in which we placed him with as much decency as possible. His brother, the captain, was not the only mourner. He was a most pleasant and handsome child, and we all were much afflicted by his sufferings and death; but like that of the patriarch, no man knoweth of his grave at the present day.

“Several regiments were left to occupy the post at King’s bridge, and two thousand men were in possession of fort Washington on the island, when we passed on to Westchester. We were next marched to mile square, where we were encamped several days. A name thus noted in the history of the war was probably derived from the face of the country, which generally is composed

of high and steep ridges of land with narrow vallies between. A mile square of level land is seldom seen.—Our next movement was to White Plains, where were a court house, a number of scattering dwellings, and some good farmers. On the 28th October, a part of the Connecticut troops under general Spencer, with M'Dougal's brigade, were posted on a ridge of land next south of the hill on which our regiment was stationed. In the morning of that day, a large detachment of British appeared ascending the highland opposite to us, to attack their command. The action soon commenced. It was a severe conflict, and we expected every moment to be ordered to re-enforce them. But it appears that our commander-in-chief did not intend to risk a general action while the enemy had such a vastly superior force, but only to fight by detachments. We therefore stood under arms and with our cannon loaded, as silent spectators of the conflict. It was the first battle I had ever seen, and the roar of musketry for more than half an hour, resembled the sound of fifty drums in continual roll. With more than a thousand muskets in continual discharge, there were no intervals of sound; but the sound of the cannon was distinct above the roaring of the musketry. General Putnam advanced up the west end of the hill with a body of men to cover the retreat if necessary. At length the two armies, as if mutually tired of the conflict, drew apart, and each endeavored to remove their wounded. On our part colonel Smallwood, esteemed a valuable officer, fell in the contest.

"While our troops halted upon Chatterton's hill, the British, in close pursuit, rested for a short time upon another eminence close by. An Irishman, one of colonel Lippitt's servants, who was called "daddy Hall," seemed quite uneasy on account of their presence. He had charge of the colonel's horse, and frequently exclaimed, "what are we doing here? Why do we stop here? Why don't we go on? I don't believe the colonel knows that the red-

coated rascals are so near." Paymaster Dexter, seeing the perturbation of the poor fellow, said, "daddy Hall, you're afraid! You're a trembling coward!" The Milesian's ire was aroused at these words, and looking the paymaster in the face with a scornful curl of his lips, replied, "be jabers! no maisther Dexther, I'm not afeerd more nor yez be; but faith! ye'll find yourself that one good pair of heels is worth two of hands afore night; if ye don't, call daddy Hall a spalpeen." And so he did, for before sunset the Americans were flying before their pursuers, more grateful to heels than hands for safety.*

"Before the main action closed, a company of about fifty artillery men with two heavy mounted cannon, approached the edge of a hill on the other side of the road, a short distance from us, and began a discharge on our line. This was immediately returned, and the first or second discharge from our field pieces evidently put them in confusion, as they ceased firing and huddled in a body round their carriages, one or both of which were disabled, or they had lost their commander. They drew off their cannon and disappeared. This was not the only instance during the war which I witnessed, of the superiority of the Americans in taking aim. The European troops never knew how to fire. This I observed at Trenton, Princeton, and in the battle on Rhode Island, in which I was engaged. In the great battles of Bonaparte, half the number of Americans engaged would have left more dead on the field than he did, and for the sake of humanity I wish they may never make any improvement in the art of gunnery. Lord Chesterfield told his son that whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well, but as the business of war is to kill men, I wish people may never learn to do it well.

"Our next remove, or retreat as it may be called, was

* This anecdote was related to the author of the Field Book of the Revolution in 1818, and published in the first volume of that work.

to the high land of North Castle, five or six miles north of White Plains. Here the enemy did not choose to follow us, but withdrew their forces into the city, while their outworks were at King's bridge. General Washington crossed the Hudson river into Jersey, and the enemy followed him till he crossed the Delaware into Pennsylvania. Our troops, of which our regiment composed a part, in the State of New York, were left under the command of general Charles Lee. Barracks and a hospital had been erected at Peekskill, where our sick were sent, and on or about the first of December, general Lee's command were ordered to Peekskill, from whence we crossed the Hudson river into New Jersey, our first stopping place being Morristown.

"The first sermon I heard after I entered the army, was while we lay at Peekskill. It was preached by Rev. Mr. Gano, father of Rev. Dr. Gano of Providence, and probably the first Baptist minister who went to the State of New York. The day was cold and windy, but Mr. G. had a strong voice, and could make himself heard. His pulpit was made of drums placed upon each other, on which he laid his great bible. He succeeded very well, and the troops gave him good attention. Chaplains, however, were not much cared for in the army, and easily obtained furloughs when wanted.

"General Lee one night before we encamped, took up his quarters several miles distant from his troops and nearer the enemy, and before morning the house in which he lodged was surrounded by twenty-one British light horse, who made him prisoner. He had no guards or sentinels to give him notice of their approach, but one of his aids, major Bradford, son of our governor Bradford, escaped and brought us the intelligence the next morning as we were on our march. I saw him as he rode up to our line. General Sullivan met him and received the news, which immediately spread through the whole line.

We halted some time in the road, and Sullivan rode through the line giving orders, to show that we still had a commander left, and did not appear to regret the loss of Lee. I confess it was not a subject of any grief to me, as I had known him in Providence before he was appointed in our army, and thought we could manufacture as good generals out of American stuff as he was. But this was not the prevalent opinion, for on first raising our army, Congress, as well as other statesmen, were impressed with the idea that the men who had served in the old French war were only fit to be appointed. Under this error, which general Washington soon found out, Lee, Gates, and others were commissioned. Gates was sent by Congress to command the northern army, without consulting general Washington, and had there not been better generals under him, he would not have had the honor of the surrender of Burgoyne.

"It was fortunate for us that the British made the same mistake in appointing generals Howe and Sir Henry Clinton to command their armies here, and old Knyphausen, who was the Hessian commander. They had some younger officers under them who had seen service in Germany, who were efficient. All this may seem a digression from the history of the capture of general Lee, who was esteemed in England at that time as the principal support of the American cause. General Howe's account of the capture I will here insert from his letter to Lord George Germain, dated New York, December 20, 1776.

"During Lord Cornwallis's stay at Pennington, a patrol of thirty dragoons from the 16th regiment, was sent out to gain intelligence of a corps under the command of general Lee, reported to be in Morris county, on their way to cross the Delaware. Lieut. Col. Harcourt desired the direction of this detachment, and learning, as he proceeded, the situation of this corps, consisting of two thousand men, and of general Lee's head quarters, he contrived by infinite

address and gallantry, to get to his house undiscovered by the guard, surrounded it, and overcoming all resistance, made the general prisoner. Being confident that this gallant action will not escape his majesty's gracious attention, it is needless for me to recommend Lieut. Col. Harcourt to the king's notice on this occasion."

"We continued our march towards the Delaware. How long we were on our route from Morristown to that river, I have no recollection, as the journal which I commenced in Newport was lost before we crossed King's bridge, and as we had no pen or ink, I could not have continued it had I kept it. We arrived at the ferry where we were to cross the river to Easton, towards night. Here we received the news that the British had taken possession of Rhode Island. Who brought the intelligence I never knew. This was distressing news to us. Whether they had advanced to Providence we could not tell, but it appeared most probable that they had, as the armed force of the State which was three regiments, were here on the banks of the Delaware, three hundred miles distant, and could render no assistance to our friends. My mother, brothers and sister, I had left in Newport, and what was the situation of our friends in Providence we could not know. Our condition before receiving this news was bad enough. Our day's ration which we drew in the morning, was a pint of flour per man. Some of us had canteens with only one head. This was fortunate for the possessor, as he could receive his flour in it, and with water mix it into dough to be baked on the embers. Some received their flour on a flat stone, if they could find one; but old Frank, an old Portuguese sailor, who had deserted from the bomb brig in Newport, and had enlisted in our regiment, took his ration in his old man-of-war cap, made of tarred yarns, and travelled from one company to another exclaiming in broken sailor English, 'if Congress can't give us bread and meat, they better make peace, and every man go and look out for himself.'

"The next day we crossed the Delaware to Easton. We drew no rations till towards night, when we had a small allowance of bread. In the course of the day, I was travelling through the town in search of a baker, in hope of purchasing a loaf, when I overtook Lieut. Stephen Olney, of Hitchcock's regiment, whom I had known in Providence. I enquired of him where I could find a bake house, as I could hold out no longer without something to eat. He was as hungry and as much perplexed as I was, but laughed, and said we must make the best of our situation and hope for better times. Several years after the close of the war, when I frequently met him in Providence, while he was a member of the General Assembly and town treasurer of North Providence, he never failed to mention the circumstance of our meeting at Easton, and the change of our situation. Easton was then a handsome place, though perhaps not half the size of its present dimensions.

"The next day our tents and camp kettles were loaded into the wagons, and we marched to Bethlehem, situated on the river Lehigh, twelve miles west of Easton. This place, in the journal of David Brainard, who was a missionary among the Indians, is called the forks of the Delaware. Bethlehem is a town belonging wholly to the Moravian society, and at the time we were there about half the houses were handsomely built of stone, and the other half were handsome log houses. Since that time I have enquired of several young ladies who were educated there, and they informed me that the log houses have disappeared, and that the whole town now consists of handsome stone buildings.

"We the next morning crossed the Lehigh by a rope ferry, and marching south faced towards Philadelphia. On this march, when we set up our tents for the night, the spare guns and cartridge boxes of the men who had failed by the way, were placed in the quartermaster's tent, which

he and the adjutant only occupied. We generally had fires in front of our tents at night, to warm ourselves as well as to cook our rations. The dryest leaves which covered the ground, we gathered into our tents to sleep on, as the ground was cold and damp. In the course of the night, the leaves between the fire and the quartermaster's tent took fire, and extending to the leaves in the tent, the cartridge boxes began to explode, and one corner of the tent was blazing. The tent in which I lodged was next to that on fire. We mustered before the two gentlemen awaked, and was in the act of pulling over their tent when they turned out. The contents were scattered, and the fire trodden out as fast as possible ; but when the quartermaster got on his clothes, he found the left skirt of his coat and part of one leg of his pantaloons were missing. The hind corner of his cocked hat was burnt off. The pantaloons he was sometime afterwards enabled to replace, but his coat and hat went through the rest of the campaign in the same condition in which the fire had left them. After the adoption of the constitution and when judge Bourne was a member of Congress, I several times reminded him of his appearance when he was our quartermaster in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and he entered into the conversation with great good humor. A coat or a hat at the time of his misfortune, was beyond his or any other officer's power to procure. Adjutant Holden laying farthest from the part of the tent on fire, did not suffer any material loss, though the explosion of the cartridges aroused the whole regiment.

" We continued our march to Bristol, twenty miles north of Philadelphia, where we set up our tents in the woods a mile or so west of that town. Here we continued until the 24th December. In the afternoon of that day, a violent cold snow storm began, and continued through the night and the next day, which was Christmas. In the night of the 24th, we mustered out of our tents and march-

ed down to the shore, where a number of boats had been collected to surprise the Hessian garrison on the Jersey side of the river. Here we waited with shouldered arms several hours for the floating ice to open a passage for our boats in which we were to cross, but the vast sheets of ice which came down so fully obstructed the passage, that general Cadwallader, our commander, ordered his division back to their tents. We suffered more this night from cold in the snow storm, than on any we had yet experienced, and when we reached the camp and shook off the snow as much as possible, and crept into our tents without fire or light, comfort or repose was out of the question. Cold—cold—cold,—and that continually.

“ General Washington, with the other half of the army, was more fortunate. They succeeded in crossing the river at Trenton, ten miles above us. The current of the river there being stronger, swept the floating ice so as not greatly to obstruct the passage of the boats. At daylight in the morning he divided his force, and advanced on the Hessians in front and rear. Their officers were partly taken by surprise. Knowing that for a considerable time before there had been no American troops in Jersey, they had little reason to expect being attacked by an enemy from Pennsylvania, in such a snow storm; but they made such a defence as, under the circumstances, they were able. They were compelled, however, by Washington to ground their arms. Two regiments and about half of another, with a company of artillery, were made prisoners. A part of the third regiment quartered at the south part of the town, fled to Bordentown, where we should have accounted for them with the rest of the division cantoned at that place, if the ice had not prevented our crossing from Bristol as before stated. General Washington re-crossed the Delaware with his prisoners and sent them up to Lancaster, sixty miles west of Philadelphia. General Howe, instead of sending another division to Trenton, withdrew his

troops from Bordentown and Burlington to the interior of Jersey, finding them to be unsafe while Washington kept up his operations during the severity of the winter.

"Our great commander appeared determined to keep up and increase the alarm of the enemy. Our division was therefore ordered to leave the encampment near Bristol, and to march up opposite Trenton, where we crossed over to that place with our whole little army. Here, with a part, General Washington remained a short time. The remainder, under General Mifflin, of which our brigade including the three Rhode Island regiments, were a part, were sent to Crosswicks, twelve or more miles into the interior.

"On the 31st day of December, 1776, the day on which the term of enlistment of the Continental troops expired, the remnant of all the divisions, brigades or regiments which had composed the army at the opening of the campaign, together with a company of volunteers from Philadelphia, were paraded. The brigade to which we were attached was composed of five regiments, three of which (Varnum's, Hitchcock's and Lippitt's,) were from Rhode Island; and the other two, (Nixon's and Little's,) were from Massachusetts. Col. Daniel Hitchcock, the oldest colonel present, commanded this brigade. Of the number of men, Lippitt's counted more than one third.— This was the time that tried both soul and body. We were standing on frozen ground covered with snow. The hope of the commander-in-chief was sustained by the character of these half frozen, half starved men, that he could persuade them to volunteer for another month. He made the attempt, and it succeeded. He directed general Mifflin to address our brigade. Seated on a noble looking horse, and himself clothed in an overcoat made up of a large rose blanket, and a large fur cap on his head, the general made a powerful harangue, persuading us to remain a month or six weeks longer in service. It was ex-

pected that in that time the States would send on reinforcements to take our places, and he did not doubt before that time we should be able to expel the enemy from New Jersey. He made some promises, perhaps, without the advice of General Washington, which were never fulfilled. He said every thing taken from the enemy during the month, should be the property of the men, and the value of it divided among them. These promises, although they had no weight or effect in inducing the men to engage, ought to have been fulfilled, though at the time they were made no one could suppose it probable we should take stores or baggage from the enemy, who had six men to our one then in Jersey.

“At the close of his speech, the general required all who agreed to remain to poise their firelocks. The poisoning commenced by some of each platoon, and was followed by the whole line. Our regiment (Lippitt's) having been at first a State, and not what was called a Continental, was enlisted for a year from the eighteenth of January. Of course, we had legally to serve eighteen days longer. But this was not known to the other troops, and probably not to general Mifflin himself. But it made no difference, we all poised with the rest.

“From the misfortunes and losses of the preceding campaign, the army was deficient in baggage wagons, and from the difficulty of transporting what we had across the icy Delaware, we had, by order of the general, left our tents at Bristol. From the celerity and uncertainty of our movements, we could have no quarters more comfortable than the frozen ground covered with snow afforded.

Through this day, (Dec. 31st,) the weather was mild, and it began to thaw. In the evening we were paraded and ordered to march. None of us knew where we were bound. We only perceived we were going westward, and at daylight in the morning we found ourselves at Trenton, which we had left two days before. From the badness of

the road, the darkness of the night, and accidents to the artillery carriages, or the falling of a horse, &c., we thus consumed the whole night in the march. We quartered in the houses occupied by the Hessians the week before. We had kindled our fires, got on our kettles, and were collecting from our knapsacks or pockets, a stray remnant of bread or tainted pork, when the drums beat to arms. Hungry, tired and sleepy, we swallowed our half cooked food, placed the camp kettles in the wagons, and leaving the comfort of houses which we had not lately enjoyed, formed the line for marching.

“It is not the practice of commanders of armies to inform their men of the reason of their orders or movements. The soldier’s duty is to obey. But in our case this was not hard, as we had entire confidence in our commander-in-chief, Washington, and knew that he never gave any orders but such as were right, and that was sufficient. It appeared afterwards, that he had received intelligence that Lord Cornwallis with ten thousand men were on their march to attack us. As the force of the enemy was more than double that of ours, crossing the Delaware, were it possible, to avoid them, would seem to have been best, but I suppose for want of boats sufficient and the obstructions of the ice in the river, this was not practicable.

“It appears that the wisdom and fortitude of the general determined him, if possible, to maintain his foothold in Jersey. Our troops were posted on the south side of a brook or small river, which crosses the town near the south end, and enters the Delaware; a continuation of the main street crossed this little river over a stone bridge. It was evidently the purpose of General Washington, to induce Cornwallis to approach and enter the town, at the north end. For this purpose, a company of artillery and a picket were placed on the road leading from Princeton, who were attacked by the advance of the British. Our brigade was ordered to cross the bridge and march through the

main town street, to cover the retreat of the artillery and picket, into and through the north end of the town. This was towards the close of the day. We met them, and opened our ranks to let them pass through. We then closed in a compact and rather solid column, as the street through which we were to retreat to the bridge was narrow, and the British pressed closely on our rear. Part of the enemy pressed into a street, between the main street and the Delaware, and fired into our right flank, at every space between the houses. When what was now our front, arrived near the bridge we were to pass, and where the lower, or water street formed a junction with the main street, the British made a quick advance in an oblique direction to cut us off from the bridge. In this they did not succeed, as we had a shorter distance in a direct line to the bridge than they had, and our artillery, which was posted on the south side of the brook, between the bridge and the Delaware, played into the front and flank of their column, which induced them to fall back. The bridge was narrow, and our platoons in passing it were crowded into a dense and solid mass, in the rear of which, the enemy were making their best efforts. The noble horse of Gen. Washington stood with his breast pressed close against the end of the west rail of the bridge, and the firm, composed, and majestic countenance of the general inspired confidence and assurance in a moment so important and critical. In this passage across the bridge, it was my fortune to be next the west rail, and arriving at the end of the bridge rail, I was pressed against the shoulder of the general's horse, and in contact with the general's boot. The horse stood as firm as the rider, and seemed to understand that he was not to quit his post and station. When I was about half way across the bridge, the general addressed himself to Col. Hitchcock, the commander of the brigade, directing him to march his men to *that field*, and form them immediately, or instantly, or as quick as possible; which of the

terms he used, I am not certain ; at the same time extending his arm and pointing to a little meadow, at a short distance, on the south side of the creek or river, and between the road and the Delaware. This order was promptly obeyed, and then we advanced to the edge of the stream, facing the enemy, who soon found it prudent to fall back under cover of the houses. What passed at the bridge while we were forming as directed, I of course did not witness, but understood that as soon as our brigade had passed, the cannon which had been drawn aside, to leave us a passage, were again placed at the end of the bridge and discharged into the front of the enemy's column, which was advancing towards it ; at the same time several pieces placed at the right and left of the bridge, with musketry at the intervals, took them partly in flank. They did not succeed in their attempt to cross the bridge, and although the creek was fordable between the bridge and the Delaware, they declined attempting a passage there, in the face of those who presented a more serious obstruction than the water.

"Night closed upon us, and the weather, which had been mild and pleasant through the day, became intensely cold. On one hour, yes, on forty minutes, commencing at the moment when the British troops first saw the bridge and creek before them, depended the all-important, the all-absorbing question, whether we should be independent States, or conquered rebels ! Had the army of Cornwallis within that space have crossed the bridge, or forded the creek, unless a miracle intervened, there would have been an end of the American army. If any fervent mind should doubt this, it must be from his not knowing the state of our few half-starved, half-frozen, feeble, worn out men, with old fowling pieces for muskets, and half of them without bayonets, and the States so disheartened, discouraged, or poor, that they sent no reinforcements, no recruits to supply the places of this handful of men, who, but the day

before had volunteered to remain with their venerated and beloved commander, for thirty days more.

"Cornwallis was doubtless mistaken as to our numbers and strength, and he might have reasonably concluded from Washington crossing from Pennsylvania into Jersey, after he had carried off his Hessian prisoners, and contesting the whole British power in that State, that he had full confidence in his resources. The common report and statement has since been, that Cornwallis at a consultation held with his principal officers, determined not to attack our lines until the next morning, in expectation of proposals to surrender by Washington. But this is not probable, though the attack was postponed. When daylight appeared the next morning, they did not see the American sentinels at the end of the bridge, and some of the officers ventured to pass over. They could see no enemy. They saw the fires still burning which we had hovered over the evening before, but we were not there. The question with Cornwallis and his officers was, where is Washington's army? Have they crossed the Delaware? No. Where were the boats? Have they gone south to Bordentown, or gone east towards Princeton or Brunswick? None could tell. They were in suspense till sunrise, when they heard the cannon at Princeton. They then took their course in that direction.

"Our march that night from Trenton to Princeton is well known. It was not by a direct road. A considerable part of it was by a new passage, which appeared to have been cut through the woods, as the stubs were left from two to five inches high. We moved slowly on account of the artillery, frequently coming to a halt, and when ordered forward again, one, two or three men in each platoon would stand, with their arms supported, fast asleep. A platoon next in rear advancing on them, they, in walking or attempting to move, would strike a stub and fall.

"Cornwallis had left two or three regiments with a

number of baggage wagons at Princeton, when he marched his main body the day before to Trenton. These troops, not knowing the approach of Washington, were on the march towards Trenton. We met them a mile or two west of Princeton college. They were first encountered by general Mercer, with his advanced body of Pennsylvania volunteers; but he being mortally wounded, fell from his horse and his party retreated. We, of the main body, continued to advance, when the British line was soon broken. They ran in different directions, but a body of them retreated to the college yard behind a breastwork, and when we had approached within fifty or sixty feet, an officer came through a sally port, with a white handkerchief on the point of his sword. General Sullivan rode up to him, and we were ordered to halt. There were about two hundred and fifty in this party which surrendered, and as many as fifty more brought in by detachments, so that we left Princeton with over three hundred prisoners, and a string of British baggage wagons loaded with their camp equipage. Our proceedings at Princeton are matters of history, except one circumstance, and that is, that the commander-in-chief took the commander of our brigade by the hand, after the action, expressing his high approbation of his conduct and that of the troops he commanded, and wished him to communicate his thanks to his officers and men.

“ We left Princeton about noon, and we afterwards understood that the advanced guard of Cornwallis from Trenton, arrived at Princeton about half an hour after our rear left it. Our course was eastward, and Cornwallis naturally supposing we were bound to Brunswick, where was general Howe’s head quarters, pushed on the same road after us till we arrived at a cross road bearing north towards Somerset, which we pursued. He did not choose to follow us, but kept on his way to Brunswick. We continued our march till 11 o’clock at night, when we arrived

at Somerset court house, in which our prisoners were lodged. It will be remembered that this was our third successive night of marching; first from Crosswicks to Trenton; second from Trenton to Princeton; third to Somerset court house; and under arms or marching the whole of the two preceding days. There were barely houses sufficient for the quarters of the generals and their attendants. The troops bivouaced for the rest of the night on the frozen ground. All the fences and every thing that would burn, were piled in different heaps and burnt, and he was the most fortunate who could get nigh enough to smell the fire or smoke.

“ The next day the severity of the weather abated, and we removed a few miles and took up our quarters in a large piece of woodland, where we rested through the day and the night following. Here we built our fires among the trees, having, as before mentioned, left our tents in Pennsylvania. Our regiment was particularly destitute; for our quartermaster, when we made our fires the night we left Trenton, went with the wagons containing our camp kettles and axes, to the side of an orchard at some distance, and did not know that the army had gone till towards morning, when the discovery was made by one of his quarter guard. He supposed it most probable we were marching towards Bordentown, and directed the wagons to take that course, so that we were deprived of these necessary articles till we had arrived at Morristown, a week after. My conjecture was, that Mr. Brown with his quarter guard and wagons, had fallen into the hands of the enemy; and as my little box containing my extra shirt and stockings was in the officers wagon, I never expected to hear from them again till their capture should be announced in the official letter of General Howe, and published in the London Gazette! But the terror which struck the generals of the enemy, by the sudden movements of General Washington, induced them to withdraw

their forces to the neighborhood of New York for safety, which left the way open for our baggage to join us, as above.

"About the third day after our arrival at Morristown, colonel Daniel Hitchcock, who commanded the five regiments composing our brigade, died from the exposures and sufferings he had experienced in this dreadful campaign. He was a very accomplished gentleman and a fine officer. Few of the generals exceeded or equalled him in talents. He was educated at Yale. Some hours before his death, when unable to hold a pen, he requested an officer and the physician to write as his will, that he gave one half of his property to his only brother, and the other half to the Benevolent Congregational Society in Providence. This they wrote and signed in his presence, and it was confirmed by the Court of Probate.

"Our brigade, after our arrival at Morristown, was divided, and marched in different detachments towards the enemy's lines. Part of our regiment was quartered for a short time at Chatham, and the foraging parties of the enemy were kept in check by our patrols and piquets. The enlistments for the service of three years or during the war, now began. A few of our men enlisted, and a body of two months men arrived from Massachusetts to supply the place of those who would not engage again. In February, captain Dexter's company were discharged at Chatham. I shouldered my pack, and in company with others travelled on to Peekskill, where we crossed the Hudson by the same ferry we had crossed on our march westward under general Lee. Our paper money wages, forty shillings per month, was never paid fully, and we received nothing to bear our expenses home.

"Some had to beg their bread
Though realms their valor saved."

"At Peekskill, we crowded into a large old public house in the village, where we met a party of the Massachusetts men going on, and thirty or forty of our discharged men

bound home. Here we found J. J. Hazard, from Rhode Island, with a quantity of shoes sent on by the State to furnish the bare footed soldiers. I was so fortunate, by the aid of captain Dexter, as to receive a pair, my old ones which I had purchased of the dutch woman in Jersey, not being in travelling order.

"It was now dark, and none could depart before morning. The house was so full that every floor must have been covered during the night. I was taken sick, but found a nook in the corner near the kitchen fire, where, after vomiting severely, I remained through the night.— For those who were well, there was no food here to be had. A fever had commenced, and I was little able to move, but captain Loring Peck, of our regiment, finding my situation, told me to take courage, and he would go with me, and if possible get me into better quarters. I was now relieved of my gun, cartridge box and canteen, which I left here, and slinging my knapsack and blanket, by the aid of the friendly captain, we set off. We travelled slowly, and after several stops reached a house at about five miles, where he persuaded the family to take me in for a few days, with the assurance that I had money enough to pay them for my board. Here I remained twenty-one days, and so far recovered as to be able to travel. I walked ten miles the first day, and the second, sixteen. The ground was thickly covered with snow all the way.

"The state of the road, the houses and the people, appeared through the State of New York, to be a century behind Connecticut and New Jersey; but when I arrived at the Connecticut line there was a visible alteration for the better. I had not slept on a bed since I left Newport, except when I was sick, when I lay on a sack filled with hay. I did not ask for one on my way home, but felt well accommodated to wrap myself in my blanket with my knapsack for a pillow, and my feet before the kitchen fire. The

last night of my journey, I arrived at Eaton's, in Plainfield, twenty-nine miles from Providence.

"Early next morning I began my walk for Providence, where I arrived early in the evening. This was the longest walk in one day which I had made since I left New Jersey. I had moved slowly before this day, though my strength increased as I proceeded. When I came to a town of any considerable note or size in Connecticut, I was in no hurry to pass through it, and had I written down my observations, I believe I could have given as good an account as many book travellers have since done. I felt particular interest in the town of Danbury, which I knew had been the chief seat of Sandimanianism, and the place where the founder of that sect finished his course. I had heard him preach in Mr. Upham's meeting house in Newport, when I was a small boy, and before his visit there, I had heard our minister, Mr. Vinal, in his sermon style him "that Rabshaker Sandiman." So when I had walked through the principal street, I inquired the way to the burying place to find his tomb. It was covered by a fine marble slab or table. When I had read the inscription, weary and tired as I was, I sat on the side of it, calling up his form and appearance. The school vacations were Thursday and Saturday afternoons, and Thursday afternoon he obtained permission to preach in Mr. Upham's pulpit. I remembered that my mother, perhaps with a view to be rid of the noise of the boys about the house, told us that the great Mr. Sandiman was to preach that afternoon, and we might go and hear him. We called some other boys, and took our seats in the side gallery, looking down into the pulpit. When Mr. Sandiman entered, he took the green velvet cushion on which Mr. Upham rested his elbows in prayer, and placed it on the bench and sat on it. He performed the service over the board on which he laid the bible. His dress was an iron grey suit, and a large white wig, such as was then usually worn by

ministers and other public men. He spoke with a Scotch dialect. Those who wish to know wherein he differed from others in doctrine, I would refer to Hannah Adams.

"This town (Danbury) was in the course of the war, burnt by general Tryon and a British army, and our general Wooster, who attacked them on their retreat, was mortally wounded. The burning of towns and villages is one of the greatest calamities attending war.

"On my arrival in Providence, my first effort at improvement was to eradicate the last stages of the Scotch distemper, the ground itch. This infected the whole army, and from the soldiers had spread through the country. I do not recollect that either the historians or physicians of Scotland account for the prevalence of this disorder among them, but my conjecture is, that as most of the cottages there have no other floors than the ground, on which, with a little covering of heather they sleep, it is thus communicated, as was the case in our army while we slept in tents or in the open air, though it may be communicated by personal contact."

The fourteen months thus spent by young Howland in the army, were perhaps the most critical of the whole revolutionary period. Success or failure in that campaign, involved the success or ruin of the American cause; and it is not claiming too much for the triumphs at Trenton and Princeton to say, they insured to the united colonies the blessings of civil freedom. It is not easy, at this distance of time, to estimate the difficulties and privations to which the army was then subjected.—But when we read of "men without clothes to cover their nakedness, without blankets to lie on, without shoes, for want of which their marches might be traced by the blood from their feet, and al-

most as often without provisions as with them,"* some idea may be formed of their character. Forever honored be the names of those who uncomplainingly endured them.

CHAPTER IV.

On his return to Providence, young Howland found the aspect of the town greatly changed.—“The year 1776,” he says, “was mostly employed in privateering, and many whom I had left in poor circumstances were now rich men. The wharves were crowded with large ships from Jamaica and other islands, loaded with rich products, and on the arrival of the British army at Newport in December, most of the contents of these prizes had been carted out of town and lodged in barns, under apprehension of a visit from them. Sir Henry Clinton and admiral Parker in their letters to Lord George Germain, excuse their not extending their progress up to Providence only on account of the lateness of the season; but Parker adds, he had completely blocked up ‘that nest of pirates.’”

* Sparks' *Life of Washington*, page 284.

Mr. Davenport, who had divided the patronage of the town with Mr. Gladding, was induced by the success of others, to throw up his business and engage in privateering. His shop was taken by Mr. G., and with it all the customers, embracing the principal elderly gentlemen of the place. To these were added many country traders who came to Providence to purchase prize goods, and the officers in command of troops quartered in the town. This increase of business gave full employment to both master and apprentice, and rendered the return of the latter a matter of considerable importance.

On entering once more Mr. Gladding's employ, young Howland supposed he had quitted the army forever. The experience, so fresh in his memory, had converted the poetry of war into exceedingly sober prose, and having discharged his duty to his country, he was entirely disposed to a quieter and less hazardous course of life than the profession of arms could ensure. Yet his was not the spirit to resist an appeal to patriotism when danger threatened defenceless homes, or the safety of the community demanded active exertion; and we find him, therefore, in September, 1777, engaged in the secret expedition against Rhode Island. Of that enterprize he gives the following account:

"It was a cause of vexation to the New England States, that the enemy should keep possession of Rhode Island, with three or four thousand men, for a part of the force with which they first landed there had withdrawn. It was therefore determined to form an expedition against them.

An army of nine or ten thousand militia was collected from this, and the neighboring States, about the first of October. This force was assembled at Tiverton. General Gordon, of Connecticut, commanded the militia of that State; Lovel, that of Massachusetts; and major general Spencer, the whole. Jabez Bowen was colonel, and Amos Atwell lieutenant colonel of our Providence regiment of militia. On this service it was the intention of the General to keep our designs secret from the enemy till we should be landed on the island. For this purpose the boats in which we were to cross, moved in the night, with muffled oars, to the point from which we were to embark. Two or three of our Providence companies were quartered a few days at the large house on the Aquatic farm, not far from Howland's ferry, when one morning we were paraded and addressed by an officer, who said two hundred volunteers were wanted, to form the advance guard, to first land on the island, and to be commanded by colonel Topham.

"Those who offered were to advance in front of the line. I reflected a moment, that if I was to be killed, or wounded, or taken prisoner in the expedition, I had rather this should take place in the front than in the rear of the army. I then advanced to the front, and offered myself as one of the advance guard. A few others followed me from the Providence boys, and from the other troops the number was soon made up. We were then marched down to Little Compton, where we could not be seen from the island. Here we remained a number of days, perhaps eight or ten. There was too much delay. It was said the general was waiting for more men to arrive. We were very impatient, but at last we were, after dark, marched down to the water side, where the bay was broad, and crowded into the flat bottom boats, where we sat with our muskets between our knees. The wind blew a gale, the waves came tumbling in from the ocean, and we sat thus till midnight. I

was confident, as our flat boats were so loaded, if we pushed off, we should never reach the opposite shore. The fear of the enemy, if we had any, had departed; drowning was now the only question. At length orders came to disembark. We landed and returned to our quarters. The expedition was given up. The enemy had discovered, during the flashes of lightning, some of the movements of our boats, and were alarmed through the length of the island, and brought their cannon so as to play on the passage where the north division was to cross. Our delay proved fatal to this expensive expedition. If general Spencer had depended more on his own good judgment, I doubt not we should have succeeded; but he called all his subordinate generals to his council, and public men from the other States. Two days after we were ordered to march home. A few days subsequent to our return, the news of the surrender of Burgoyne and his army arrived in Providence. The failure of the expedition against Rhode Island produced great complaints among the people of the States who had furnished the men, and been at a great expense in supplying them. General Spencer, to relieve himself from blame, requested the States concerned to appoint a board of commissioners to assemble at Providence, to inquire into the causes of the failure of the enterprise. This State appointed three, viz.: Gideon Comstock, Ebenezer Thompson, and John Sayles. The commissioners from the other States attended on the day appointed. When they organized and were entering their names, Mr. Sayles, of Smithfield, was not present. Inquiries were made whether he was in town. It was said he had been seen that morning. The sheriff was dispatched to look for him. At length a report was made that he was on duty as a private in the militia, and was then on guard as a sentinel at the door of general Spencer. The general, who was present, immediately directed

colonel Peck, the adjutant general, to go and order the officer of the guard to relieve him from his post, and request him to repair to the State House. Mr. Sayles accordingly attended, and the board proceeded to business. It was as singular a case as perhaps ever took place in a regularly organized military system, that a private soldier, on duty as a sentinel at the general's gate, should be summoned as one of a court to try his commander for neglect of duty. This high commissioned court had some able men in it from the other States. They examined the circumstances in their several parts, and finally made a roundabout report, rather acquitting the general from blame or censure. General Spencer some time after resigned his commission, and retired to civil life. He subsequently represented Connecticut in Congress. Sullivan succeeded him in the command in this department. He was a showy parade officer, and when he served under the immediate command of General Washington behaved well, and executed his orders with spirit. Here he practiced a severe discipline in the army.

"This year (1777,) Sir Henry Clinton left Rhode Island, under the command of general Prescott, as Lord Percy had also retired from the command as well as from all military service, and gone to England. Though descended from the family of that name so celebrated in the wars of the Scottish border, and in the story of Chevy Chase, he possessed a mild and peaceful character. He disliked the service here, and his courteous treatment of the citizens of Newport drew from them, on his departure, a complimentary address, which may be seen in the London Magazine of that year. The names of the signers are omitted there, and a list of them, could they be found, would be worth a journey to Newport. Prescott, who now had the command, was a poor creature, fit only to tyrannize over and abuse the inhabitants. Pigot, also superannuated, was the second in command. General Prescott, in the

summer season, lodged in the house then belonging to John Overing, four or five miles north of the town, on the west road, which was of easy access from the water on that side of the island. In July, 1777, colonel Barton, under the cover of night, embarked with thirty or forty men from Warwick, in boats with muffled oars, landed and passed across the fields to the house, which his party surrounded. Several of them entered, and guided by a negro who had been a servant in the family, proceeded to the chamber in which the general slept. Barton gave him but a short time to put on his clothes. Some of his garments they gathered up for him to put on at the waters' side. They also took lieutenant Barrington, the general's aid, and landed them safe at Warwick Neck. Col. Barton sent an express to general Spencer, at Providence, with a request for a coach to be dispatched to convey him and his prisoners to head quarters. Thomas Sabin, with his coach, set off with colonel Robert Elliot, to receive the general and the colonel. They were landed at the house of Samuel Chace, Esq. It was necessary for the general and his aid to be put in better trim before they were presented to general Spencer. I was sent for to dress the general's head. He was a small, feeble old man, but his aid, Barrington, was a handsome young man. They were dressed in their uniforms. The neck stocks then worn were composed of fine cambric, with a strap which buckled at the back of the neck. When the aid stood before the glass adjusting his shirt collar and stock, he asked me to pin the stock. As I was doing this, I said, 'have you no stock buckle, sir?' He replied quickly, 'no; and a gentleman in the house has just loaned me this stock, for, by G—, we came away in a d— hurry.' Prescott was some time after exchanged for general Lee, who was taken the winter before in New Jersey, and returned to Newport, to the great joy of the inhabitants. The year 1777 was an eventful period in the history of the revolution, and

those who pretended to believe in signs, wonders and prognostics, laid all its transactions to its containing three sevens. It was determined by the enemy to cut off the communication between the eastern and the western States. For this purpose an army of twelve thousand men were assembled in Canada, and Sir Guy Carlton dispatched the greater part of this force under general Burgoyne, to force his way by the Lakes to Albany. We had about two thousand men at Ticonderoga, who on the approach of Burgoyne retreated to Saratoga. This was a subject of regret to the whole country, as it was intended that the works at Ticonderoga should stop the advance of Burgoyne. The retreat eventually proved advantageous, as it permitted him to advance so far that when hard pressed his retreat and communication with Canada was cut off. The history of the transactions of our northern army, and the surrender of Burgoyne, are matters with which every boy is, or ought to be, fully acquainted ; so I leave the subject with the burden of a popular song then in vogue :

“We conquered Burgoyne

In the year which contains the three sevens,” &c.

“General Burgoyne obtained leave of Congress to go to England, to vindicate his character respecting his conduct of the campaign, and the surrender of his army. Congress no doubt were very willing to grant permission, as he would necessarily throw the blame on Sir Henry Clinton, or on the ministry, and give our friends in Parliament a good opportunity to renew their condemnation of the latter for prosecuting the war. I do not recollect the time, but think it must have been in the spring of 1778, that the general set off from Cambridge in a coach, accompanied by major Trescot of our army, to see him provided for on the road, as it was intended to go first to Newport, and to embark from there, or from New York. He was not suffered to come through Providence, “to see the nakedness of the land,” but was driven through North Providence,

and over Tar bridge, to Christopher Olney's, who kept the public house in Olneyville, where he dined. The village was filled with the idle and curious from town, to see a man who had made such a noise in the world. I did not go out to pay him so much honor. After dinner, he entered the carriage again, and with his escort drove to Pawtuxet, where a packet boat was waiting for them. The principal British officer received them on landing, and conducted the general to head quarters. Our major Trescot was a noble looking officer, and was treated with polite attention. The next day he inquired for a hardware shop, as he wished to purchase a pair of silver spurs. While making the purchase, a British officer entered the shop, and addressing the officer who accompanied Trescot, said, 'do the Americans want spurring?' The major, turning partly round to him, said, 'ask general Burgoyne, sir, I understand he is in town.' When the British army had possession of New York, many of the officers visited in the families of the citizens. A lady in one of the families, (a true American,) had in her hand an American newspaper, which she handed to an officer to read. He found in it the names of several of our generals, among others Howe, of North Carolina, and Clinton of New York. The officer said to the lady, 'so I perceive you have a Howe and a Clinton in your army.' Yes, replied the lady, but you have no Washington in yours. This proud, triumphant reply the gentleman did not think proper to dispute.

"Glover's brigade, and several companies of artillery, after the capture of Burgoyne, were stationed in Providence, with old general Stark's and general Arnold's.—Glover's quarters, a part of the time, were in the house of Richard Jackson, and Arnold's in the house west of the bridge, owned by Nathaniel Greene, which was afterwards bought by Gov. William Jones. Arnold, though he had been one of the best fighting generals in the army,

was a proud and vain man. He wore a scarlet coat, which was the color of the British uniform. I attended every morning at his quarters, and dressed his hair. While under this operation he generally read a novel. Knowing him to be one of the most celebrated military characters, I was surprised to see him so employed, as out of the way of his profession. Among the gentlemen with whom he associated, he frequently declared that he would resign his commission unless he was soon promoted. In company, one day, he repeated his intention of resigning, when old commodore Whipple said, 'general, I know you won't resign.' Arnold asked why he doubted his positive declaration? The commodore replied, 'because, general, you are the proudest man that ever I seed; and I know you won't quit your uniform, your epaulets, and command, to be a private man—for I tell you, you are the proudest man that ever I seed.' The commodore knew the general better than he knew himself; for, after he was raised to the rank of major general, he offered to sell his country.*

*The ground of Arnold's discontent, was his omission by Congress in the list of promotions made on the 19th of February, 1777, at which time five junior officers were raised over him to the rank of major-general. This he affected to view "as a very civil way" of requesting his resignation, as unqualified for the office he held, and in a letter to General Washington, dated at Providence, March 11th, requested a court of inquiry into his conduct. Washington regretted this course of Congress as impolitic, but did not consider it, from the grounds upon which they acted, as a reflection upon his merit. In reply to Arnold's request, he says, "As no particular charge is alleged against you, I do not see upon what ground you can demand a court of inquiry. Besides, public bodies are not amenable for their actions. They place and displace at pleasure; and all the satisfaction that an individual can obtain, when he is overlooked, is, if innocent, a consciousness that he has not deserved such treatment for his honest exertions." The court of inquiry was not insisted upon, and, probably the fondness for the scarlet uniform, as intimated by the old commodore, influenced him to withhold his resignation. Congress subsequently advanced him to the rank he coveted.

CHAPTER V.

In 1777 was developed what is known as "Conway's cabal." It was a combination of generals Conway, Gates, and others, to disparage and undermine the reputation of General Washington. "The first aim of the cabal was, no doubt, to disgust Washington and cause him to resign. It is probable, that Gates's immediate coadjutors in the army looked to him as the successor, and that Gates flattered himself with this illusive dream."* This conspiracy was not confined to the disaffected in the army. It found favor with several members of Congress, though not, perhaps, wholly for the reasons that influenced the former.

With the main facts in relation to this hostile movement, and with the current opinions of the day concerning it, young Howland was familiar, and the indignation awakened by such an attempt upon his revered commander, may readily be conceived. In relation to this subject he speaks as follows:

"Among the members of Congress whom Gates hoped to win over, was William Ellery, of Rhode Island, one of the signers of the declaration of independence. But he

*Sparks' Life of Washington, i: 274.

was the wrong man to approach. He had the utmost confidence in the integrity of Washington, and in his fitness for the trying and responsible post of commander-in-chief. He gave no credit to the thousand complaints and stories put in circulation against him. The movements of Gates and his fraternity he did not at first understand, and in order to get a clear insight of their plans, he met with them a few times. As soon as he became satisfied that the overthrow of Washington was designed, he declined all further communication with them, and employed his influence privately, to prevent such a catastrophe. In April, 1779, general Gates arrived in Providence, as the successor of general Sullivan, and remained till November. He made his head quarters at a house hired for the purpose, belonging to Judge Jenckes, which stood on the site now occupied by the Roger Williams bank, fronting market square. My master's shop was near by, and as the leading men of the town frequented it, the general often sent letters of public interest there for their perusal. This gave me an opportunity to read them, and so I early got acquainted with facts relating to the war, which were not published in the newspapers.

"The general patronized our shop, and it fell to my lot to wait upon him at his quarters. During his stay in Providence, he received a visit from Samuel Adams, then a leading politician in Boston. One morning, when I went to dress general Gates's hair, I found Mr. Adams with him. They were conversing on a subject evidently of a private nature, for Mr. A. immediately stopped, and took up a newspaper as if to read. The general, with less prudence, continued talking while I was arranging his hair, as though I had not been present. He probably thought I should take no notice of what he said. Not so, however, with Mr. Adams. He better understood youthful curiosity, and as often as the general addressed him a question, answered with a h-u-m and a scowl, that betrayed

the annoyance he felt. I observed that he several times endeavored to attract the general's attention, that he might sign him to silence, but without success. This, as may be supposed, opened my ears still wider, to catch every word. I soon discovered that Washington and his removal from office was the theme, a discovery confirmed in my mind, when Gates said to Adams, "what the devil is the matter with Ellery? I thought we could depend on him." To this, and other remarks, Adams answered only as before with a h-u-m and a scowl. Having completed my work, I returned to the shop with diminished respect for Gates, and thinking more of Washington than ever. Mr. Adams, it was then understood, was favorable to Gates's scheme, though I do not know that he was active in prosecuting it. He was afraid, it was said, that Washington would become too popular, and abuse the power with which he was intrusted; a fear that his whole life proved to be unfounded.

"Samuel Adams was a hearty patriot, and did much to break the chains of tyranny. His great power lay in agitation, and in arousing the people to the resistance of oppression; but he had not much of the conservative wisdom of his cousin John. He understood well enough how to raise a storm, but not so well how to calm it. I remember, some years after I set up business, hearing Daniel Lawrence ask governor Hopkins, in my shop, which of the Adams's he considered the greatest. To this the governor replied, "John Adams is the greatest man in the country to build up a government, and Samuel Adams is the strongest man to pull one down."

"In 1778, a French fleet arrived and anchored between Block Island and Beaver tail, and an expedition was formed by Sullivan against the enemy on Rhode island, who were now blockaded by sea. All the continental and State troops were assembled at Tiverton, and one half of the militia were likewise under orders, with a division from Massachusetts, commanded by John Hancock, who was

not a military man, but had been persuaded by his native State to accept a militia commission to raise the depressed spirits of the people to greater exertions. It is a singular circumstance, that on this expedition the commissions of Sullivan and Greene were issued and signed by John Hancock, as president of Congress, and that Hancock served under them as a subordinate officer of the militia.

“The enemy abandoned the north and east part of the island, intending only to defend the town of Newport, which they strongly fortified, while Sullivan delayed his preparations. Our army at length landed on the island, and advanced towards the town. Greene as second in rank, commanded the right wing, and the Marquis Lafayette the left. Colonel Laurens, Talbot, and major Henry, commanded the advance, near the line of the enemy. It was not doubted that the British would propose terms of surrender, which probably delayed the storming their works ; but ‘there is a Providence which shapes our ends, rough hew them as we will.’ On the night of the 11th of August, a gale and storm came on, more severe than any for many years before. The day before the gale, the British fleet from New York appeared off the harbor of Newport, and the French fleet, which was snugly anchored in the harbor, got under way and went out to attack them. The British were inferior in force and fled to sea, the French close after them. The gale then began ; the ships were separated in the night, and several of them dismasted. The English, with their crippled ones, made for New York ; some of the French arrived in Boston. Our militia were soaked in the storm, their guns and powder wet, and the tents blown down. Half of them were ordered to march. As the first division was not to leave the ground till the second arrived to take their places, ten or twelve days intervened, in which all the men, from sixteen to sixty, were under arms or from home, the women and children having to do all the out door work. It was my

fortune to belong to the second division, which went to relieve those who had suffered in the storm. The dispersion of the French fleet left the harbor of Newport open for the enemy to reinforce the garrison, which they did, both with men and stores. This rendered the surrender hopeless, and about twenty days after our division had arrived on the debatable ground, the campaign ended, by our being ordered to leave the island, crossing at Howland's ferry. If Sullivan, when at the head of five thousand men, had landed on the island, the enemy would have been defeated, and another English army captured; but he delayed for troops to join them till the town was fortified.

"In 1779, when the British and Hessian troops were in possession of Rhode Island, a large body passed in boats from thence to Warren, where they burnt several houses besides the meeting house, then retreated down the road and through Bristol to the ferry, where their shipping covered their retreat. In their way through the town, the American loyalists who were with them, set fire to Gov. Bradford's house, which was the best then in town, and several others, together with the Congregational and the Episcopal churches.

"The fact so cruelly verified in the war between the houses of York and Lancaster many centuries ago, in the land of our fathers, has been witnessed in every civil war since, and shows to what a degree civil commotion will exasperate and enflame the contending parties. In the whole course of our revolutionary struggle, those of our own Americans who had joined the enemy, were our most bitter enemies.

"A number of the best landed estates in the colony were sequestered and eventually confiscated, by a simple resolution of the General Assembly, without any judgment of a court. The cause assigned was, that the owners of them had joined the enemy, though most of them never took up arms. Some of them were in England before the war

commenced, and others on the evacuation of Boston by the British troops went with them to Halifax, and from thence sailed for England, where they never assumed a military character, or in any way acted against this country. The owner of the large estate in Tiverton, near Howland's ferry, lost that valuable property because he resided in England. The Mount Hope farm shared the same fate, for the same reason, and because the State was poor and wanted money. It was first assigned to a number of officers of the army to whom the State was indebted, and they transferred it to Gov. Bradford. The largest estate confiscated by Rhode Island was the Point Judith farm, which belonged to the Sewell family, who at the time resided in England. The Deblois house, on North Main street, Providence, was set off to several officers in payment of their claims.

"I always considered the seizure of the estates of Col. Joseph Wanton to be peculiarly unjust. He had been uniformly friendly to the best interests of the country, and his influence with his father, governor Wanton, and the other judges of the high commissioned court, in the case of the Gaspee, was supposed to have caused that tribunal to break up and dissolve, without convicting any of those concerned in her destruction. The apology for the seizure of his estate was, that while the British army had possession of Rhode Island, Prescott formed the citizens able to bear arms into a regiment, to mount guard during the night. This they were compelled to do, or be considered rebels, which in fact and feelings most of them really were. Col. Wanton was appointed to command them. He could not refuse, without abiding the penalty, as he was wholly in their power. This being his situation, and knowing the vindictive temper of the sons of liberty against those who in any way appeared to join the enemy, he, when the British evacuated the town, sailed with them to New York, doubtless in expectation of returning when his

conduct had been explained, and his friends should be willing to receive him. Had he not left he would have been safe, as others who had been in the same service, remained unmolested. His estates were not at first confiscated, but only sequestered by the General Assembly ; but long after the treaty of peace they were sold in violation of that treaty, which provided that no further confiscation should take place.

“ During the revolutionary war no dwellings were erected in Providence, and the First Baptist meeting house was not completed till after the proclamation of peace. On the celebration of thanksgiving for the conclusion of that treaty, which was held in that house, the town requested Doct. Hitchcock to preach the sermon. Good Mr. Snow offered the first prayer. He began by saying, ‘ convened on this *solemn occasion*,’ &c. Doct. Hitchcock commenced, ‘ assembled on this *joyful occasion*.’ The text was, ‘ The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.’ Doct. Manning read the psalms, and offered the concluding prayer. These three were all the ministers then belonging to the town, except Mr. Graves, who had ceased to officiate, because his people would not consent to his praying that the king might conquer and subdue all his enemies. On the return of peace, we were destitute of many of the necessary articles of life. Clothing we had suffered for, and the cloth woven in families was the only manufacture, so that men of property were compelled to cut off the skirts of their coats to patch the elbows with. This induced the merchants to order large shipments from England, but they had small means of remittance. Of oil and potash, the usual articles shipped before the war, there were none. Flaxseed was sent to Ireland, but not enough to pay for the linen imported. The specie which the French army had left in the country, was therefore transmitted to England in payment of goods imported. Most of our importers before the revolution, owed considerable

sums to the house of Haley & Hopkins, in London, which could not be remitted during the eight years war. By the treaty of peace, all debts due by either party before the war were now recoverable. The house of Haley & Hopkins was one of the largest exporting houses in London, and most of the indebtedness of Providence was to that firm. Both had deceased, and madam Haley, who was sister of John Wilkes, the Lord Mayor of London, came over to collect the debts due here. On her arrival great court was paid to her. She soon found the money was not ready; therefore she bought a house and settled down with her clerk, to wait for the moving of the waters. She was invited, on one occasion, to a grand ball at Hacker's Hall, and as she did not dance, she took a seat with the ladies at a card table, in the drawing room. She placed a guinea on the table as the stake. The ladies looked at her with surprise. They had none to match it, and perhaps it was the first time some of them had ever seen one. A pause followed, which was at length explained. They were not accustomed to play for money, but only for amusement. This the old lady could hardly understand, but she wished to conform to the customs of the country. English people are not in the habit of telling their age, but from her appearance she was between seventy and eighty; yet her capacity for business was not impaired. It was said she eventually collected all that was due her, which was honorable to her creditors, who had passed through a distressing and disastrous revolution, in which so many thousands had perished. She removed to Boston, where she married her agent, a Scotchman, who after he had obtained possession of all her vast property, sent her to England with a shameful pittance for her support.

"The paper money emitted by Congress to carry on the war, by the beginning of the year 1777, began to depreciate, and continued to fall in value till it ceased to pass as a currency. As the money depreciated, the price of

everything on sale rose in nominal value. Still, the majority of the people did not see that the fault was in the money; but blamed those who had property for sale as wicked speculators. They were denounced from one pulpit as enemies to their country. Congress having no power to assess taxes, or collect on impost, had no means of carrying on the war but the issue of continental bills, which on their first emission passed at par. But, obliged to issue millions more, the depreciation kept pace with the amount in circulation, till, in the year 1780, paper dollars passed at seventy-two for one, or a penny each, compared with silver.

“It was deemed patriotic to insist that the bills for which the faith of the continent was pledged, would eventually be redeemed, dollar for dollar. The most unaccountable circumstance was, that many of the wisest men in the United States seemed to be totally ignorant of an essential and inviolable law of trade, which no government has the power to abrogate or repeal, viz.: that the price of articles on sale in any country, will uniformly equal the amount of money in circulation. Thus, if by any means the specie or money in the country is double that of the preceding time, without any increase of property on sale, the price of such property will double. In other words, it will always take all the circulating medium in a country to buy all the goods on sale. Before Congress had obtained loans in Europe, the value of the bills issued fell to an hundred for one.

“I recollect that I called in at Peter Taylor’s hatter’s shop, as I was on my way home to dinner, and asked him the price of a castor hat. He said it was four hundred dollars. I selected one which fitted me, and told him on my return I would call and pay for it, and take it. On my return, perhaps an hour afterward, I stopped with my bundle of money, to pay for and take the hat. He then told me he had been calculating what he could buy the

stock for to make up another batch of hats, and found that at four hundred dollars he could only replace the stock, without allowing anything for his work ; but as he had agreed with me for the price, he should charge me no more. I told him I did not wish to have the hat less than its present value, and asked him what it now ought to be. He said about four hundred and fifty dollars ; which I readily paid him, and told him I was glad I had called to-day, for if I had waited until to-morrow, it might have been five hundred dollars ! Some time afterward, I purchased a French cocked beaver hat, for five hundred dollars.

“The most absurd opinion which possessed the minds of the people generally, was, that the price of all goods and labor should be fixed by law, and their infatuation so far prevailed, that it was enacted in several of the States. The State Bill, as it was called, passed by our General Assembly, was published in a book form, in which the price of every article which every member of the House could think of, was fixed. This was designed to render the paper bills equal to silver dollars. I do not now remember the penalty annexed, for a violation of this act.

“The shipping of specie to Europe, to pay for the vast amount of goods imported, rendered the people in this country unable to pay the debts they had contracted with each other. This raised a rebellion in Massachusetts. By the means of county conventions, the courts were not permitted to hold their sessions. Mobs collected around the court houses, and prevented the judges from entering. The militia were called to aid the sheriffs, but they generally joined the insurgents. Daniel Shays raised an army of two or three thousand men, in the counties of Worcester and Berkshire, and governor Bowdoin raised another to quell the insurrection, commanded by general Lincoln.—Shays attacked the armory at Springfield. The cannon were discharged, seven or eight of Shays’ party killed, and

the rest dispersed. Shays fled to Canada. During these transactions in Massachusetts, our State partook of the same excitement. But here, as our election was near, it was determined to turn out those who had carried us successfully through the war of the revolution, and place others in their room who were opposed to the payment of debts. This took place at the May election. The governor, lieutenant governor, senate, and all officers were changed. A large batch of paper money was emitted, and made a lawful tender. If a creditor, when offered the paper money, refused to take it and cancel the debt, the debtor had only to deposite the bills in the State treasury, and the debt was declared void. This was done in many instances. But another difficulty arose. The paper money party, as they were called, who wanted to purchase goods from the shops, could not induce the shop-keepers to trade. To remedy this, the Assembly passed an act that any person who had articles of any description to sell, and refused to take the paper money at par, should pay a fine of one hundred pounds. The person offering the paper was to state the refusal to a judge of the court, who had authority to decide without jury, and order the penalty paid. On the passage of this, which was called the penal law, all the shops in town were shut up. The market house was closed. The country people brought nothing in to sell, though they were all paper money men. They came in to buy, but found nothing to sell. Paper money would not purchase a dinner. People dodged out of the way when a debtor appeared in sight, for fear of a tender of paper to cancel the debt. One day, three or four of us, neighbors, were standing in front of Elisha Brown's shop, when all the shops were closed. Judge Thompson, who lived opposite, came out and asked Brown why he kept his shop shut? He wanted to go in for some necessary things. Mr. Brown replied, that as the law stood he dare

not open it. It would not do for him to sell for paper money, as he could not buy anything with it, and if he refused to take it he must pay a hundred pounds, which he could not afford. The judge said, 'neighbor Brown, I tell you open your shop. I will insure you against any penalty.' Brown replied quickly, will you, judge? 'Yes,' answered the judge, 'open the shop.' Mr. Brown took the key from his pocket and opened the door. The judge entered and bought what he wanted. Brown then put his goods out as usual. This, for several days, was the only shop opened in town. Charles Lippitt next opened his, which stood on Whitman's land, and others followed. The only complaint for violating the penal law was made by a man who called at Lippitt's shop to buy a jack-knife. Lippitt laid a bundle of knives on the counter, and after selecting one the customer took out a pack of paper bills and offered one of twenty-five cents, the price of the knife. Lippitt declined taking it, and returned the knife to its place, then replaced the bundle on the shelf. The customer put the bill in his pocket, and went to judge Thompson, and entered his complaint according to the law. The judge assigned the next Monday, at three o'clock in the afternoon, at the court house, for the trial of the case. When the time came, the Representatives' chamber was full, for every man, as well as every woman, felt an interest in the decision. Mr. Lippitt had engaged Mr. Bourne to defend his cause, and Mr. Sampson appeared for the plaintiff. The judge took his great chair at the end of the table, and the case was opened by Sampson in behalf of the State, or of his client. Mr. Bourne spoke about an hour and a half. His argument went chiefly against the constitutionality of the law. He contended that no man could be deprived of his property, or life, without a trial by a jury of his peers; that every bill of rights in England, as well as America, secured the right of such trial; that the law in question was therefore void, and could not

be enforced. The counsel for the complainant, contended that the power of the General Assembly was unlimited by the charter, or any declaration of rights established here, &c., &c. When the attorneys had ceased, the judge arose. He said, the honor and dignity of the State must not be violated. The laws must be respected. The character of the State required it. If the people thought the laws were not good, they had the power, at the next election, to put in other men to alter them. In the present case, a great deal had been said about constitutions and bills of rights, and other things; the court will take time to consider. Adjourn the court to next Monday, three o'clock in the afternoon. Thus ended the first session. The next Monday, before three o'clock, the house was again crowded. At the hour appointed the judge took his seat, and the lawyers went through their arguments, repeating what they had said before, and as much more as could be found to bear on the subject. When they had exhausted themselves, the judge again arose, and repeated nearly the same words which he had delivered the Monday before, and concluded by saying, 'The court will take time to consider. Adjourn the court till next Monday, three o'clock in the afternoon.' Thus ended the second session. The next Monday, at three o'clock, we were all there again except the judge. We kept our seats till four o'clock, when the paper money folks requested the sheriff to go to the house of the judge and ask him to come, if he could find him, as perhaps he had forgotten the time. In about an hour the sheriff returned, and reported that he had been to the judge's house, and on inquiring for him the negro woman made this luminous reply: 'Our cow run away this morning, and we don't know where she is, and master has gone to Tockwotten to look for her, and if he finds her he will drive her home before dark to be milked.' As there was no clerk to this court, I ventured to proclaim, 'this court is adjourned without day,' and we

all departed. Thus ended the great and important case of the jack-knife. It was decided by judge Thompson's white-faced cow, in her session at Tockwotten, that the penal law was unconstitutional. The shops and market were no longer closed. The paper money passed with those who chose to take it, at five for one, and it was eventually sunk by an act of Assembly in paying the State tax at one silver dollar in lieu of fifteen in paper.

"In 1797, the yellow fever broke out in the south part of the town. It began on the 12th of August. Its first victims were the family of Mr. James Arnold, the town treasurer. Mr. Arnold, his wife, and son Joseph, died in three days, and a servant girl two days after. Thus the whole of the family perished in less than one week after the fever first appeared. Others in the neighborhood followed in a few days. About one hundred and fifty in the whole, died. But few of the number infected recovered. Many of the inhabitants fled from that part of the town, and escaped the infection. Our hospital was built while the fever was raging, and the sick removed to it. It was a remarkable fact, that the disease could not be communicated from one person to another. It existed only in the atmosphere at the south end of the town, and was taken nowhere else; and as tar-barrels burnt night and day in the street, or any change of the wind had no effect on the contagion, some conjectured that it arose from the ground. When the same disease visited Philadelphia, two or three years before it came here, the question was agitated whether it was of local origin, or imported from the West Indies. Able essays were written by able physicians and others, on both sides of the question, but no sufficient proof could be brought to support either of the positions. A question arose, which was debated by the physicians, of more importance to the afflicted, viz.: the best method of cure. Doctor Rush, of celebrated talents, practised copious bleeding as the only remedy. Others opposed bleeding,

and used bathing and heat to induce perspiration, but about an equal number died under both operations, and no cure was found till the frost came, when the pestilence ceased. The fever in Philadelphia and in Providence began and continued in the street next to the river. The other parts of the town were as healthy as usual.

“In August, 1800, Providence was again visited by this pestilence. Those who timely removed to other parts of the town or country were safe. When the fever, a few years before, had carried off five thousand people in Philadelphia, a contribution of about a thousand dollars was sent from Providence for their relief, and on the same disorder raging here, the citizens of Philadelphia sent on fifteen hundred dollars, to be distributed among the suffering families.

CHAPTER VI.

In the preceding chapter, Mr. Howland's recollections were brought down in unbroken narrative to the commencement of the present century. We now return to particulars which could not there be conveniently introduced.

Having completed his term of service with Mr. Gladding, he commenced business on his own account. He opened his shop on North Main street, near the residence of governor Bowen, subsequently known as the Manufacturers' Hotel. By the advice of several of the leading citizens, he adopted a higher tariff of prices than had hitherto been customary. This gave to his shop a somewhat select character, and it soon became the resort of the prominent and influential politicians of every shade of opinion, as well as of the professional gentlemen of the town and vicinity. And thus was again opened to him, on a broader and more agreeable basis, a coveted opportunity for increasing his store of political information, and for extending his knowledge of the characters and opinions of the principal men of the times.

Prior to 1788, when his pastor, Rev. Dr. Hitchcock, was elected a member of the Pennsylvania Society for the abolition of Slavery, that subject

had engaged Mr. Howland's deliberate thought. The existence of the African slave trade, he considered a bitter reproach to christian civilization, and the act of Congress branding and treating it as piracy, received his unqualified approbation. Born while domestic slavery was yet in existence at the north, he had seen it under its most favorable aspects, without becoming a convert to its principles; and its abolition by the New England States, he ever regarded as one of the brightest pages in their history. This form of servitude, wherever existing, he deemed a degradation of labor, and therefore a positive evil to the State. The discussion pending the admission of Missouri into the union he watched with patriotic anxiety, and with the national faith pledged to the compromise as a finality, its violation or repeal he classed with the wildest improbabilities. Yet he lived to mourn over that improbability, as a dishonorable historic fact. While, in his judgment, the constitution guaranteed to each state the right to regulate its local institutions, it did not authorize one to force them temporarily or otherwise on another. He maintained that if it was constitutional for one member of the union to establish slavery within its territory, it was not a violation of that instrument for another to ordain that slavery should not exist within its borders—that if, under the constitution, a southern State had a right to imprison and sell into slavery a free colored or black man from the north, a northern State had an equal right to enact that no colored or black man should be held in bondage on her soil. Each State was authorized,

within prescribed limits, to manage its own affairs without molestation; and their mutual intercourse involving slavery on the one hand, and freedom on the other, if not settled by mutual laws, must be by comity. He had no confidence in disunion as a remedy for the evil which, at different periods, had thrown the country into angry and acrimonious excitement. He believed, that if these mutual rights were calmly considered and thoroughly understood, by the great body of freemen, an important step towards the removal of a national reproach would be gained. For the final extinction of slavery, he relied mainly on taking it from the political arena, and pervading it with the moral influences of christianity. However his views may have differed from others, on both sides of the question, he censured no one for declining to adopt them; and while they carried with them no pretension to novelty, they possessed the merit of having been carefully formed and uniformly maintained.

The following incident, which occurred not long after he left the army, illustrates his early feeling for the slave, as well as the prevalent idea of the rights of the master. At the commencement of the revolution, Providence contained a little more than three hundred blacks and colored people. A regiment from this class was formed in Rhode Island, which ranked among the most efficient troops in the continental service. Among the black population of the town, was a slave named Quaco. From among all his white acquaintance, he selected Mr. Howland as the confidant of

his plans and aspirations. Quaco had a kind and indulgent master. A good home and a position of familiarity enjoyed by the most favored house servants, were insured to him. Of his treatment he never had occasion or desire to complain. Still, he was not quite happy. He knew that he was a slave—a chattel—and in the fluctuations of fortune, liable to pass into other hands. The American revolution had broken a sealed fountain of thought. From the idea of disenthralled States, a transition to the idea of personal emancipation was natural and easy. He loved his master. He was strongly attached to the family. But freedom was dearer than all. Kind treatment as a slave was not an equivalent for personal liberty. Besides, example was contagious. Every day some fellow bondman, under sanction of law, enlisted into the continental service as a preliminary step to emancipation, and after considerable reflection, he determined to pursue a similar course. This decision he disclosed to Mr. Howland, and asked his advice. Sympathising with the spirit of his sable friend, and willing to serve him, yet desirous of saving his master from the immediate loss of a good servant, he hit upon an expedient. His first measure was to dissuade Quaco from enlisting. "I have been in the army," he said, "and know all about camp life. The exposure of a soldier is great. You have been brought up in a warm shop, and cannot endure the severity of the winter in camp, nor the fatigue of active service. If you go into the army, you will either be killed in battle,

or sicken and die. If you want your freedom, I can put you in a better way of obtaining it than by enlisting."

He then directed him to let his master see him frequently conversing with the enlisted negroes, and when questioned, to state frankly his desire and design. This he thought due from the servant to the master. He believed that such a course would preserve the master's good will, and lead to a satisfactory compromise. "Your master," said he, "seeing you bent on becoming a soldier, rather than have you leave him now, will most likely tell you that if you will serve him faithfully three years longer, he will set you free. If he makes such an offer, you must accept it, and be true to your agreement." "Ah," said Quaco, "dat is jist it. Dat is better dan 'list in de army and get kill. I'll do jus what you say, massa Howland."

The result proved as anticipated. For several days Quaco improved his opportunities to converse with the new recruits. His master observed him, and inquired the reason. Quaco explained. He wanted to be a free man, and was going into the army to become one. The law was on his side, and his master, finding him fixed in his purpose, proposed the foreseen compromise. "Remain with me three years, the time you must serve in the army, and I will give you your freedom." This was better for the slave than the perils of war, and the terms were joyfully accepted. Quaco served the three years with great fidelity, and obtained the long coveted boon. Subsequently, his late master built him a small house, which he occupied

until his decease, grateful to his friend for wise and successful counsel, happy in the favor with which the act of manumission had been crowned, but still happier in the consciousness of legal manhood.

January 28th, 1788, Mr. Howland was married to Mary, daughter of John and Elizabeth Carlile, and great grand daughter of James Franklin, the eldest brother of Dr. Benjamin Franklin. The issue of the union was thirteen children, eight of whom died under the age of three years. Mrs. Howland, by temperament and harmony of taste, was well adapted to share the cares and pleasures of domestic life. Familiar with revolutionary occurrences, and the traditions of the earlier times of the colony, the young found in her an entertaining and instructive companion. She early made a public profession of religion by uniting with the First Congregational Church, and ever maintained a consistent example. An enlightened piety gave vivacity to her conversation, and the tender interest manifested for her family imparted to home an unbroken charm. For many years before her decease she was an invalid, and the subject of almost uninterrupted pain. But this trial she bore with the christian cheerfulness of one who had never distrusted the divine goodness, and May 28th, 1845, at the age of eighty-four years and seven months, she departed this life in the blest assurance of entering the "rest that remaineth for the people of God."

For several years preceding his marriage, he assumed the guardianship of a younger brother, a

duty that was discharged with more than fraternal solicitude; and no word of counsel or encouragement was wanting to ensure the success of one so tenderly loved. In a letter to his ward, under date March 26, 1788, he says, "In the course of your observations, since you have been abroad in the world, I dare say you have remarked this one thing, that temperance and sobriety with the other moral virtues, are the jewels a man ought *never* to part with. And as persons are very apt to adopt the manners and habits of those with whom they associate, how careful ought a man to be, especially a young man, what company he keeps. You will pardon me for these hints, when you reflect that your reputation is dearer to me than your life, and that both are bound up together with my own happiness." And again, in reference to his future prospects, he writes, "good morals, good nature, a disposition to prudence, together with industry and perseverance, will in time make a man respectable in almost any place."

A man of Mr. Howland's general knowledge and capabilities, could not long remain in obscurity. He was known and appreciated by the leading minds among his townsmen, and hence we early find him called into positions that required the full exercise of his powers. His connexion and influence with a large and increasing body of mechanics, rendered him a peculiarly suitable person to take an active part in measures interesting to the community. He never thrust himself offensively before his fellow citizens and hindered the advance of others; but he was ready, when called upon, to

share in any labor, however onerous. He was often put forward against his inclination. The secret of his success in winning confidence and accomplishing ends, lay in the fact that he always made a careful study of the subject to be presented to the consideration of a popular assembly, and had as carefully devised the means to be employed at the moment of need. His power had its source in self-knowledge. He knew, as has been said, "to what he was equal, and, what is less common, he knew to what he was unequal. The one he was always ready to attempt; the other he left to those of better education and greater ability."*

Many of the most important acts at town meetings were passed through his instrumentality, and often in the face of strong opposition. On such occasions, he showed himself an adroit tactician, as the passage of the school appropriation, mentioned in another chapter of this work, shows; and it seldom occurred that a measure of importance to the interests of the town, failed for want of pre-consideration or well concerted action. In a long series of years, his name is associated with committees for widening streets, ascertaining original lines and boundaries, devising better methods for the support of the poor, sanitary inspection, &c., trusts that were discharged with promptness and fidelity.

In 1803, he was appointed town auditor, having several years before declined a similar appoint-

*Dr. Hall's Discourse.

ment. The duties of this office, more important than is commonly supposed, were discharged until 1818, when he was elected town treasurer. He continued to be annually re-elected until the organization of the city government in 1832, when he declined being considered a candidate, and devoted the remainder of his active years to other duties. These repeated elections to an office of great responsibility, were the best evidences that could be offered of the public confidence, and at the same time were an honorable tribute to his probity.

During the official period of twenty-nine years, Mr Howland had witnessed with becoming pride the growth and prosperity of his adopted home. Commerce had extended her enterprise, manufactures had laid a broad foundation for future success, the mechanic arts had flourished, literature and science had multiplied their friends, religious and educational institutions had steadily increased, to meet progressive wants, and a town of four thousand inhabitants had expanded, in 1850, to a city of forty-six thousand, richly endowed with all the elements of material, intellectual and spiritual prosperity.

The active business of life did not impair his desire for self-culture, nor stand in the way of his progress. The fire kindled in childhood, while reading the narrations of the bible, or devouring Pilgrim's Progress, burned with an intensity in ripper years, that his avocations and the cares of a rising family could not quench. A book was kept constantly at hand, and every leisure moment, not

devoted to writing, was occupied with study. The old Providence library, of which he was several years an officer, and of which also he wrote a brief history, afforded him means for mental improvement that were eagerly embraced. This institution, founded about 1754, and merged in the Providence Athenæum in 1836, contained nearly nine hundred volumes, mostly works that accorded with the solid cast of his mind. All these he read in the "odds and ends" of hours, and from their rich and varied contents, obtained an intimate knowledge of history and a familiar acquaintance with political economy, metaphysics and polemic theology. To this opportunity so diligently improved, were added such advantages as could be gained from private libraries, and books occasionally purchased. The works of Bacon, Locke and Burke, were among his studies, and when the *Reflections on the French Revolution*, by the latter, appeared from the American press, his interest in the events of that period induced him to procure in Boston the first copy brought to Providence. This he loaned to President Maxcy, and to his regret, was lost.

Mr. Howland's studious habits were kept up to the close of his life. Besides the standard works of history, art, science and religion, which constituted his more substantial reading, he kept himself familiar with the current literature of the day, and was never at a loss for a topic of conversation fresh from the press. A few years before his decease his sight failed so that he was obliged to give over reading. His last attempt was Novem-

ber 4th, 1851. With the aid of a powerful lens he succeeded in reading two chapters in the New Testament; but the effort was too fatiguing to admit of repetition. This was a deprivation of no ordinary character; cutting him off, as it did, from his long accustomed intercourse with minds "that speak aloud for future times to hear." But the trial was greatly mitigated by the daily readings of a daughter, whose filial devotion cheered his declining days, and made her truly the light of his eyes.

Mr. Howland early exhibited a fondness for antiquarian researches. In old people, old things, and stories of ancient times, he delighted. Of the former his inquiries were minute, and with the latter he was never satiated. At home or abroad, in society or apart from the world, his constant aim was to accumulate knowledge of the past. His interest in genealogy was intense, and so familiar had he become with the history of the early settlers of Rhode Island, that there was scarcely a family of note, concerning which he was not prepared to give detailed information. From such a living volume of history, his friends, and strangers even, seemed to think they had a right to read a chapter whenever they wished information for themselves, or had occasion to enlighten others. And thus it occurred, that no inconsiderable portion of his time was cheerfully devoted to answering inquiries concerning boundaries, localities, persons and families. The contributions in this way supplied, including copious sketches of commodore Abraham Whipple, general James Varnum, and

others, furnished to authors, would form, if embodied, a large and valuable volume. The estimate in which his knowledge was held, may be inferred from the following letter addressed to him by the late Hon. Tristram Burges :

“WATCHEMOKET FARM,
Seekonk, Dec. 10th, 1849. }

JOHN HOWLAND, ESQ. :

My dear sir,—Your long acquaintance with Providence, has made you to know all the men of the last and present generation, and your very tenacious memory renders your mind a store-house of human events and actions. I am desirous to be permitted to draw on this store-house to obtain some reminiscences in respect to the men of former times. My acquaintance with Providence did not, for any such purpose, really begin until the autumn of A. D. 1776. For though I had resided in the town more than three years at that time, yet my residence was at the college ; nor was I in the street more than once a week, and then on the Sabbath ; so that I knew nothing then of the men of those times. My union with the family of Welcome Arnold, and my extreme affection for those of that family still living, render me desirous to write a short memoir of the life of that man, and I know of no gentleman alive who can furnish me with so many facts concerning him as yourself. I pray you, therefore, my dear sir, to put down and communicate to me, in a letter, chronologically, what you can, without too much inconvenience, write concerning Mr. Arnold. You will thereby confer a great favor on the survivors of his family, and also on, my dear sir,

Most respectfully and truly

Your friend and servant,

TRISTAM BURGES.

To Mr. Howland, the antiquarian was always a

welcome visitor, and many acquaintances thus formed, ripened into permanent friendships. Among those drawn to him by affinity of tastes, was the late judge George Thacher, of Boston. In preparing a genealogy of the Thacher family, a hiatus occurred that the records and traditions of Massachusetts would not fill, and in 1816 he visited Rhode Island, with the hope of obtaining the necessary materials. His unpublished diary contains a lively account of his journey, and of his first interview with Mr. Howland, an event ever after held in pleasant recollection by both. After describing his ride from Taunton to Newport, and thence to Bristol, where he was introduced to judge John Howland, he continues :

“He could give me no account of the first settlement of the place, or of the Jabez Howland I was in pursuit of. However, after informing him of my wishes and hopes on the subject I was inquiring of him about, he said there was a John Howland, in Providence, who was a man of vast knowledge in the antiquities of the first settlement and families of the State, and if I were going thither, he had no doubt but I should get from him all the information there existed on the general subject ; “for,” said he, “when anybody in these quarters wants to know anything concerning their ancestors, or the first settlement of the State, they always go and consult him, and he rarely fails satisfying them on all subjects of inquiry.” This gave me new hopes, and I concluded, agreeably to Mr. and Mrs. Davis’ previous inclinations, to return to Boston through Providence.

“We reached that place just before night, and put up at Mr. ——’s. I hurried down into town, and inquired for Mr. Howland, and was soon directed to his shop. I

entered, and inquired if friend Howland commanded here? On which a well-dressed man arose, and said his name was Howland. I began to interrogate him if he was a native of Providence? to which he replied no; he was born in Newport, and came to this place at the age of twelve. I asked the name of his father; he answered Joseph. Of his grandfather; he replied Joseph. Of his great-grandfather; he said Jabez. I then began to feel sure of getting the information I had so long been in pursuit of, and inquired if he could tell who was his great-grandmother, wife of his great-grandfather, Jabez Howland. He said her name was Bethyah or Bethya, but he had not been able to find who she was, what was her maiden name, or where she came from, though he had made many inquiries and researches into all the ancient records he could hear of, that were likely to solve his doubts. I then told him her name was Bethya Thacher, who was the daughter of Anthony Thacher, the first of the name in this country. He came from England with his wife Elizabeth, whom tradition said he married about six weeks before he left that country, with four children by a former wife, and landed at Newbury, in June or July, 1635; and that soon after, about the middle of August, he, with his family, and others, to the amount of about twenty-three, were cast away on an island off the shores of Cape Ann, as they were sailing in a shallop to Marblehead, and every soul perished but himself and wife.

“By this time he had finished shaving me, and I gave him my hand, assuring him it afforded me the greatest pleasure to take by the hand one of the descendants of Bethya Thacher, and that we stood in the relation of third cousins. After some inquiry as to the sources of his information, &c., I requested him to take what papers he had, that might throw light upon the subject of our common ancestors, if he had any, or of any of their descendants, and call at my lodgings after he should have closed

his shop in the evening, which he complied with. I found him a clear headed, well informed man, of very good habits, and one who stood well in the estimation of the people of the town."

In his researches, Mr. Howland often lamented the recklessness with which the papers of the early settlers of Rhode Island had been destroyed. From a quantity thrown into the street, which he gathered up and carried to his place of business, he recovered several original letters of Roger Williams; and from the accumulations of more than a hundred years, in the hands of one who had held important offices under the provincial and colonial governments, and which had found their way to the paper maker's pulp vat, he rescued one letter from general Nathaniel Greene, and three or four from governors Lyndon and Ward. Every such loss he felt to be "a break in the order of nature," and an obscuration "of events under a providential government which produced and completed the American revolution." He believed, in the words of another, that "the care which preserves the materials for a people's history, is characteristic only of advanced stages of civilization, and a high degree of social and intellectual culture;"* and that the want of the times was some organized agency that would illustrate this truth. It was with uncommon satisfaction, therefore, that he hailed the formation of the Rhode Island Historical Society, in 1822, as the dawn of a brighter day for the annalist and historian.

* Gammell's Discourse.

Though not one of the framers of the society, he immediately became a member. At the first annual meeting, he was chosen a vice president, but declined in favor of another. Subsequently, he was chosen treasurer, the duties of which office he discharged nine years. On the retirement of governor James Fenner from the presidency, in 1833, he was elected his successor. To the objects of the society he was faithfully devoted, making frequent donations of books, pamphlets and manuscripts to its cabinet. Among his earliest labors, were the preparation of two lectures, embracing the fruits of extensive investigations, which were read before the society. The Royal Society of Northern Antiquarians of Denmark, in 1835, conferred on him the distinction of honorary membership. With the opinion of that learned body, founded on elaborate research, that Rhode Island was visited by the Northmen, before the discovery of the western continent by Columbus, he entirely concurred; but did not with them believe that the remains of the famed stone mill, an attractive feature of Newport, afforded evidence of the fact.

"The fact of ante-Columbian discovery of our northern continent," he says, "having, in the opinion of the Denmark Society, been established beyond controversy, may perhaps have induced them to give full credence to the antiquity of the building in Newport, known by the name of the Old Stone Mill. Our dissent from this assumption, however, will not operate to distrust the evidence of the first discovery, which we may conceive to have been previously established. The letters of Dr. Webb, our former secretary, to the society at Copenhagen, stated the

several traditions extant in Newport, relating to this building, together with the clause of the will of governor Benedict Arnold, which with us have generally been esteemed valid, respecting the origin of that building. The letters of Dr. Webb were accompanied with the several drafts of the same by Catherwood. The comparison of these with ruins still existing in Europe of ante-Columbian buildings, has, however, led the Denmark society to conclude that its age corresponds with that of their ancient date.

“One of the oldest inhabitants of Newport, and who from early life has resided in the neighborhood of the building, informs us that when the British army were in possession of the island, in the war of the revolution, they removed the wooden roof, and all the large beams and flooring of the second story of the building, and applied them to the construction of their batteries. In this operation, they threw down several feet of the stone work of the walls, leaving them less conspicuous from the harbor; and the hollow places in the wall, in which originally rested the ends of the timbers that sustained the floor, confirms this statement. It appears that there was no choice in the selection of the stones, as if it was designed to lay them in regular courses; for the pillars, as well as the entire walls of the building, are composed of stones of every size and shape, as they might have been collected or plowed from the adjoining land.”

In 1845, a medal caused to be struck in honor of J. Fennimore Cooper, by commodore Jesse D. Elliott, was transmitted to the society by that officer, through the Hon. John Quincy Adams. On recommendation of a committee, to whom the subject was referred, and for reasons personal to the memory of commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, the acceptance of the medal was declined. This decis-

ion the president was directed to communicate to Mr. Adams, with a resolution of thanks to him "for his care and attention in the discharge of the trust committed to him," and the following correspondence ensued:

PROVIDENCE, September 23d, 1845.

HON. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS:

SIR:—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated "Washington, 17th March, 1845," and also of the medal therein mentioned, which commodore Jesse D. Elliott has caused to be struck in honor of J. Fennimore Cooper, Esq., and which was transmitted by you, at the request of commodore Elliott, to be presented in his name to the Historical Society of Rhode Island.

Your letter, with the medal, were laid before the board of trustees of the society, at the first meeting thereof after they were received by me; and were by the board referred to a committee, who were prepared to report them at the annual meeting of the society, on the 19th of July last, but were deterred from doing so by the fact, that a few days previous to the time, it was announced in the newspapers that commodore Elliott was dangerously ill. The next meeting of the society was held, by adjournment, on the 10th of September, instant, on which day the committee made a report, and a resolution was thereupon passed by the society, two attested copies of which are herewith annexed.

Pursuant to the directions contained in that resolution, I herewith transmit to you the medal, and in the name of the society, respectfully request you to return the same to commodore Elliott, and send him, therewith, one of the enclosed copies.

Please to accept assurances of the high respect with which I remain, Sir, your humble and obedient servant,

JOHN HOWLAND,

President Rhode Island Historical Society.

QUINCY, MASS., 29th September, 1845.

JOHN. HOWLAND, ESQ., PRESIDENT OF THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY, PROVIDENCE.

SIR:—I received, on the 24th inst., by the mail, your letter of the preceding day, together with the medal in honor of J. Fennimore Cooper, Esq., struck by commodore Jesse D. Elliott, which, at his request, I had in March last transmitted to the Historical Society of Rhode Island, as a present from him. Enclosed with your letter were two copies of a resolution of the Historical Society of Rhode Island, refusing to receive the medal, and requesting me to return it to commodore Elliott, together with one of the copies of the resolution.

I decline the office requested of me by the Historical Society of Rhode Island, and hold the medal and the copy of their resolution which they request me to transmit to commodore Elliott, to be delivered to any person whom they or you, by their direction, may authorize to receive them. I retain the copy of the resolution of the society intended for myself.

I am, very respectfully, Sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

In 1848, at the age of ninety-one years, feeling, as he said, "the usual infirmities attending this advanced period," he tendered to the society his resignation, which was not accepted. To his letter the following reply was returned:

TO JOHN HOWLAND, ESQ.

PROVIDENCE, October 3, 1848.

Respected Sir,—You were this day re-elected president of the Rhode Island Historical Society by unanimous voice, and I herewith send you a transcript from the records of their proceedings, at the request of the members.

Yours, &c.,

THOMAS C. HARTSHORN,

Secretary.

"On the recommendation of the committee on nominations, to whom was referred the letter of Mr. Howland, declining a re-election to the office of president, it was unanimously voted, that the thanks of the society be tendered to him for his long and faithful services; and that he be requested still to continue in the office, performing only such duties as he feels the state of his health and his age will permit."

This delicate compliment was sensibly appreciated by Mr. Howland, and he continued in office to the close of his life, making the whole period of service twenty-one years. The last record of his presence at the society meetings, is January 15, 1850. After that date he went abroad but little, and the duties of the office were discharged by the first vice president, Albert G. Greene, Esq. Honorary memberships were conferred upon Mr. Howland by the Georgia Historical Society, Essex Historical Society, and the New England Genealogical Society. Of the old colony Pilgrim Society he became a member at its formation, in 1820. Of his official correspondence, but little has been preserved. A few letters are here appended, indicative of the interest he felt in institutions established to promote historic and scientific pursuits.

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE ESSEX HISTORICAL SOCIETY, SALEM.

PROVIDENCE, November 27, 1822.

Dear Sir:—Having some years ago received from the family of deacon James Greene, the gloves of Governor Leverett, I wish you to receive and deposit them in the cabinet of the Essex Historical Society. Mr. Greene's mother was a Leverett, and the gloves had been preserved in the family through several generations, who had lived in the stone house which was the governor's mansion.

Having repeatedly heard from Mr. Greene the history of the gloves, which he had from his mother, and also from his grandfather Leverett, who said that they were the same worn by his great ancestor on public days, and in his attendance on the great and general courts, I have no doubt of their identity. Your society being in possession of the portrait of the governor, and one of his descendants being one of the trustees of the institution, furnishes a strong reason for their preservation and safe deposit with you.

It has been my intention to procure for the society some writings of Roger Williams, but the manuscripts I have, relate exclusively to the early history of this State, and the Rhode Island Historical Society lay their claim to them on that account. But I do not despair of obtaining others not of this exclusive character, which I shall feel it my duty to forward to Essex.

With great respect, and hearty thanks for the honor conferred by the society, I remain

Your obedient servant,

JOHN HOWLAND.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

PROVIDENCE, R. I., May 15th, 1843.

Dear Sir :—The communication of the American Philosophical Society, inviting the Rhode Island Historical Society to coöperate with them in the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of its organization, has been but recently received, and was this day laid before our board of directors, who have expressed their sense of the honor of your attention. The names of the great and highly estimable men who founded the American Philosophical Society, still live in our remembrance, and it is a matter of joy to us in this remote region, that they have been succeeded by those of equal rank and talents. Our

views and operations, as the name of our society indicates, are necessarily limited to the department of the antiquities and history of this country, from the time of the first landing of the emigrants at Plymouth; though we feel a deep interest in the progress and scientific influence of the numerous literary societies throughout the union. The first volume of the historical committee of the Philosophical Society, which reached us some years since, containing Mr. Heckewelder's account of the Indians of the eastern and western regions, which compose so large a portion of the United States, is most valuable, as containing the traditions, as well as an authentic account of the manners and customs of these ancient inhabitants of the forest. We have not as yet ascertained whether we shall be able to send a delegation to join with you in the celebration, but pray you to accept our sentiments of high respect and regard.

Yours, very sincerely,

JOHN HOWLAND.

TO BRANTZ MAYER, ESQ., BALTIMORE:—

PROVIDENCE, April 26, 1844.

Dear Sir:—I duly received your highly pleasing notice that the State of Maryland had formed an Historical Society, of which you are the corresponding secretary, and delayed answering it for the purpose of laying it before our own board of trustees at their earliest meeting. But circumstances having delayed that meeting, I cannot longer delay to express the high satisfaction and pleasure with which we received this notice, and rejoice in the favorable auspices of its progress. Had such a society existed at the close of the revolutionary war, its records would have reflected high honour on the characters and names of many great and eminent men, who flourished there during that eventful period of her history. Documents could then have been procured which cannot now be found. It

will always be mentioned to the honor of Rhode Island and of Maryland, that they were the first two governments in the world that established freedom of conscience in religious concerns ; and this idea should ever strengthen the bonds of sympathy and good fellowship between the historical societies of the two States.

With a hand which has been in motion nearly eighty-seven years, I am unable to add, except assurances of high respect and regard.

JOHN HOWLAND,

President Rhode Island Historical Society.

In acknowledging the letter from the secretary of the Georgia Historical Society, announcing his election as an honorary member, he says, "The Georgia Historical Society, in influencing the State authorities to employ an agent to transcribe from the colonial papers in England, all that relates to the early history of the State, will ever reflect honor and distinction on your society, as well as on the State of Georgia, and may hereafter lead the government of the United States to complete true copies relating to the other twelve original States."

For his ancestors, Mr. Howland cherished strong filial regard, and there is little doubt that the study of the salient points of their character imparted a vigorous tone to his own. For many years he carefully collected such memorials of them as records and traditions furnished. These, at the age of seventy-two, he entered in a book procured for the purpose, "not doubting," he remarks, "that it will be pleasing to my daughters and grandchildren to possess this result of my labors and re-

searches, as a pledge of my affection, and as a stimulus for them to emulate the virtues and good name of the honored individuals composing the several generations from whom they have derived their descent. Having been accustomed to contemplate the divine precepts and commands in their most liberal and largest extent, I have never considered the command, "honor thy father and thy mother," as limited to my immediate parents, but as extending as far back as we can trace the ancestry, should it even reach to the days of the court of the Star Chamber, or the fires of Smithfield."

The character of the Pilgrims commanded his profound veneration. Their patient forbearance with Lyford, whose kind reception was rewarded with acts of base hypocrisy and treachery; their readiness to indulge their minister Chauncey, in the practice of his peculiar notions of baptism; the sanctity with which they invested the Sabbath, and their scrupulous care for the manners and morals of servants and children; the simplicity and unsectarian features of their church covenant, by which believers united themselves "into one congregation or church under the Lord Jesus Christ;" the rejection of all creeds but the bible, and the maintenance of congregationalism, united with the denial of all right of interference in matters of religious faith, entitled the colony, in his opinion, to pre-eminence as a christian commonwealth.

With these feelings, it was natural that of the ancient towns in New England, out of his native State, Plymouth should be to him fraught with the

most interesting associations, and that the annual return of "Forefathers' day" should have for him the sacred joyousness of a "Feast of the Tabernacles." And thus it was. For the

"Men who spurned the tyrants' rod,
Men who bowed to none but God,"

there was a large place in his heart; and the day that commemorated the Mayflower compact, he would make a jubilee. "It ought," he writes to a friend, "to be ever remembered with joy by the descendants of the Pilgrims, with praise and thanksgiving to God, for his mercy in preserving so many of them to fulfil his great design in the settlement of this land with so faithful a race of men." At three of these anniversaries he was present. His first visit to Plymouth for that purpose in December, 1803, he thus describes:

"It was at the urgent request of judge Barnes, that I met him there. He had frequently attended the courts in that place, and was acquainted with all the respectable citizens. To every gentleman to whom I was introduced by him, he informed them that I was a descendant of John Howland, who arrived in the Mayflower. This was to me better than any letter of introduction, and by his means, I became acquainted with all the old patriarchs, and with many of the younger generation of that ancient town. In the afternoon of the 21st, we visited and drank tea with the family of Esquire Cotton, his near kinsman. On Forefathers' day, we attended worship in the old first church founded in America. President Kirkland, of Har-

vard, delivered the sermon. The deacon, judge Spooner, who looked almost old enough to have landed on the rock, read the psalm, beginning with

“Let children hear the mighty deeds
Which God performed of old,
Which in our younger days we saw,
Or which our fathers told.”

We dined in a large old house, the partition walls of which were removed to make room for the tables in the chambers. This place, I understood, was selected because it had been the residence of governor Bradford.”

He was next present in 1820, a year distinguished as completing the second century since New England's shores “were first impressed by the footsteps of men” who “gave an empire birth.” Daniel Webster delivered the commemorative discourse, now a classic in the schools of our country, and justly described as “correct in its historical statements, powerful in argument, rich in description, and pathetic and eloquent in action.” The dinner service, ornamented with a representative of the landing of the Pilgrims, and other appropriate devices, was manufactured in England, by Enoch Wood & Sons, expressly for the occasion. From the surplus of this importation, he purchased twelve plates and two pitchers, which, with five kernels of corn placed on his plate at the table, he brought home, and preserved as mementos of a scene crowded with cherished memories. Four years later, he was again in Plymouth, when Edward Everett thrilled a thronged assembly with a brilliant oration, “replete with instructive details

of history, of pious patriotism, and glowing effusions of praise "

" Of men who fought for God, and gave
Home for a desert shore,
With hearts too panoplied and brave
To quail beneath its roar."

On this occasion, Sargent's picture of the landing of the Pilgrims was for the first time displayed, in Pilgrim Hall, and Mr. Howland had the satisfaction of looking upon the features, as there delineated, of his "godly" progenitor.

Accompanied by a daughter and nephew, he subsequently visited Plymouth on a filial service—to search for and identify the grave of John Howland, which, like Carver's, was then unmarked by slab or "storied urn." They set out early in the morning, and dining at Taunton, reached their destination near night. It was a fatiguing ride; but though weary and hungry, he could not permit himself to partake of refreshments until he had drank from the "Pilgrim spring." This done, he returned to the hotel with an increased relish for supper. The next morning he called on Dr. Thacher, who accompanied him to Pilgrim Hall, where he spent some time in viewing the various articles of interest there collected. They then repaired to the registry office, to examine the early records; and from thence went to the burying ground, where the sought for grave had been identified. Having made arrangements with his venerable friend, Dr. Thacher, to superintend the erection of a head-stone, they proceeded to Forefathers' rock, and thence to the residence of Dr. Le

Baron, a gentleman learned in Pilgrim lore, who welcomed Mr. Howland with the warmth of a brother antiquarian. In passing from point to point, Dr. Thacher said, "I want you to remember everything to which I direct your attention. I am now over ninety years old, and shall not be here when you come again." The words were prophetic. They parted, and met no more.

Mr. Howland's last visit to Plymouth, was in company with his friend and neighbor, William Wilkinson. They carried with them a curiously inlaid Cabinet, brought from England in the Mayflower, by the parents of Peregrine White, belonging to the widow of governor Jabez Bowen, and by her presented to the Pilgrim society. It was made the companion of governor Carver's chair, and other antiquities adorning the society's hall; "and there," says Mr. H., "I hope it may be seen a thousand years hence, though probably in half that time the English language as now spoken, will not be intelligible."

In 1845, the two hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims was celebrated at Plymouth with more than usual enthusiasm. From the Pilgrim society he received an invitation to attend, to which he returned the following reply:

PROVIDENCE, Nov. 24, 1845.

Gentlemen:—I received with pleasure and grateful feelings, your invitation to attend the commemoration of the two hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of the

landing of the Pilgrims from the Mayflower, as I am doubtless the only remaining one of the survivors of the fifth generation of the fathers, who arrived in that far-famed ship; there being only three between me and my ancestor, John Howland, who landed on the rock.

I feel peculiar interest in the event now to be commemorated, but being in the eighty-ninth year of my age, I am uncertain whether my health will permit of my being there. It may, in some measure, depend on the state of the weather, as well as on the means of conveyance. There are now but few remaining of those who were present when I first attended the celebration, but I would enjoin it upon the rising generation never to omit its due observance. It is a day sacred in the memorials of the old colony, thousands of whose descendants are now scattered over all our States, and who should never forget the circumstances connected with the arrival of their Pilgrim ancestors.

With great respect and regard, yours,

JOHN HOWLAND.

The Committee of Arrangements.


This letter, which was published in several newspapers, attracted a good deal of attention, and led to the correction of an error into which the writer had inadvertantly fallen. From careful investigation, Mr. Howland supposed himself, as expressed, the only survivor of the fifth generation of the Mayflower stock. It appeared, however, from facts which the statement elicited, that there were still living three persons of the fifth generation, namely, Job Howland, of Conway, N. H., aged eighty-one years; Mehitable Nye, his sister, of Sandwich, Mass., aged seventy-two; and Southworth Howland, a brother, of Worcester, Mass., aged seventy.

It has since been ascertained that a descendant of governor Bradford in the fifth generation, was also living, namely, Sophia Bradford, of Duxbury, Mass., who died in February, 1855, at the age of ninety-four. "I do not now regret," he says in a letter to a friend, "that I was deceived, as it has brought to my acquaintance more relations than I should otherwise ever have known. My impression was founded on a conversation I had with Dr. Winslow, twenty years ago, in Plymouth. With a number of the descendants there convened, he told me he was of the fifth, and did not know of any other besides us of that generation then living. As he was of the first Winslow, I supposed his knowledge correct." Those who have had any experience in genealogical researches, will not be surprised that even one so proverbially accurate should have been temporarily mistaken.

CHAPTER VII.

We now turn to another important era—in many respects, perhaps, the most important—in Mr. Howland's life, in which he appears as the earnest advocate of Free Schools. For one hundred and sixty-four years from the founding of Rhode Island, no uniform system of education had been organized. In Providence, where the importance of "sound learning" had from the earliest times been recognized, the schools were of a miscellaneous character, sometimes private, and at others partially sustained by the town, in conjunction with a company of school house proprietors. In 1767, a movement was made "with the apparent design of providing schools for all the children of the inhabitants,"* and committees, consisting of John Brown, John Jenckes, Nathaniel Greene, Charles Keene, Samuel Thurber, Darius Sessions, Samuel Nightingale, Jabez Bowen and Moses Brown, were appointed at a town meeting to further this object.

* Staples' Annals.



The plan, though receiving the cordial support of the leading inhabitants, was not adopted. In 1795, a similar attempt was made, but with no better success.

Mr. Howland had been an attentive observer of this course of things, and, as he saw the inadequacy of the means of education, and reflected upon the privation of his early days, he felt himself stirred to make an additional effort in behalf of a cause so vital to the welfare of the rising and succeeding generations. He noticed that the plan of free schools, supported by a general tax, met with the strongest opposition from the class they were intended to benefit. Upon the hint this fact supplied, he predicated his future action. He resolved on attempting to arrest this hostility by creating, if possible, a correct public sentiment, and by overlaying it with what is sometimes technically denominated a "middling interest" influence. The first of these measures was effected by free conversation with his townsmen, and by appeals through the press. The second was accomplished by securing the united and active cooperation of the Mechanics' Association. At this juncture, the skill he had acquired in composition proved a valuable help.

In an address before the quarterly meeting of the association, January 14, 1799, he says, "Most of us who are at present members of this association, have had but few advantages of education, but it will be our fault, as well as the fault of our fellow citizens, if the next generation is not better

taught. Perhaps this is a subject on which we are too indifferent. It is a subject which ought to be the lesson of the day, and the story of the evening. Let it be said in all private companies—let it be asserted in all public bodies—let it be declared in all places, till it has grown into a proverb—that it is the duty of the legislature to establish free schools throughout the State. But until this can be accomplished, let us not neglect our duty. It is the duty of every man who has children, to see that they have what is called a good common education; not such a common education as permits them to grow up destitute of morals or of principles; but such as will qualify them to be respectable as well as useful members of society.” In this extract appears the germ of an idea with which he labored, and successfully, to imbue the community.

The story of his efforts is best told in his own words, as taken down by the author, during an interview in 1847. The familiar unstudied language of the recital, which has been literally preserved, imparts to the narrative an additional interest; and having compared it with the records, and verified the accuracy of every statement relating to the action of the town, it must ever be regarded as an invaluable contribution to the school history of Providence.

“In 1789, the Mechanics’ Association was formed, and in this body begun the agitation that led to the establishment of public schools. When we came together in our association, we made the discovery of our deficiencies. There were papers to be drawn, and various kinds of writ-

ing to be done, that few of us were competent to execute. Then we began to talk. The question was asked, ought not our children to have better advantages of education than we have enjoyed? And the answer was yes. Then it was asked, how shall those advantages be secured? The reply was, we must have better schools. So when we had talked the matter over pretty thoroughly among ourselves, we began to agitate. As I was something of a talker, and had practised writing more than most of my associates, a good deal of this work fell to my lot. And I was very willing to do it, because I felt and saw its importance. So I wrote a number of pieces for the newspaper, and tried to induce others to do the same. I prevailed, however, with only one, Grindall Reynolds. He felt as I did about the matter, and wrote a piece for the Gazette in favor of schools. We had, indeed, the good will of many educated men. There were Thomas P. Ives, Thomas L. Halsey, David L. Barnes, and others, who had been educated in the public schools in Massachusetts, all of whom understood our wants and favored our movement. Governor Bowen and the Bowen family, were also friendly. So was Gov. William Jones. We met no opposition from the wealthy, but they having the advantages for their sons and daughters that wealth can always procure, did not feel as we poor mechanics did. They were not active. In this beginning of the movement, they seemed willing to follow, but were unwilling to lead the way. It is a curious fact, that throughout the whole work, it was the most unpopular with the common people, and met with the most opposition from the class it was designed to benefit.* I suppose this was one reason why the most influential citizens did not take hold of it heartily in the beginning. They thought its success doubtful, and did not wish, in a

* This testimony corroborates Moses Brown's recorded experience in 1768. See Barnard's R. I. Pub. School Rep. and Doc., 1848, p. 36.

public way, to commit themselves to an enterprise that would curtail their popularity and influence. This was not the case with all, but it was so with many.

"The more we discussed the subject, the greater became its importance in our eyes. After a good deal of consultation and discussion, we got the Mechanics' Association to move in the matter. This was an important point gained, and an encouragement to persevere. A committee was chosen to take up the subject. Of this committee I was a member. They met at my house, and after due deliberation, it was resolved to address the General Assembly. I told them, that as neither of us were qualified to draw up a paper in a manner suited to go before that body, we had each better write a petition embodying our individual views, and bring it to our next meeting. Out of these mutual contributions we could prepare a petition that would do. This was agreed to, and the committee separated. When we next met, it was found that but two had been written according to previous recommendation. Those were by William Richmond and myself. Richmond then read his. It was in the usual *petition* style, ending, 'as in duty bound will ever pray.' I told the committee I did not like the doctrine of that paper. It was too humble in tone. I did not believe in *petitioning* legislators to do their duty. We ought, on the contrary, in addressing that body, to assume a tone of confidence that with the case fairly stated, they would decide wisely and justly for the rising generation. I then took out my memorial and read it. It was not in the shape of an 'humble petition.' It expressed briefly our destitution, and the great importance of establishing free schools to supply it. It received the approbation of the committee, and was adopted.*

*"Who will not honor John Howland even more for taking the lead in that memorial, than for having served under Washington at Trenton, and braved death in the battles of the revolution"—*Rev. Samuel Osgood's Address*, 1846.

"This memorial was presented to the General Assembly in the name of our association.* It was there warmly debated, and after pretty severe opposition, the Assembly referred the whole subject to a committee, with directions to report by bill. This bill, embodying a general school system, was drawn up by James Burrill, jr., Attorney General of Rhode Island. I was with him all the while, and he readily complied with my suggestions.

"When the bill was reported, the Assembly was afraid to pass it, until the sense of the towns could be obtained. So it was printed, and sent out to the freemen for instructions. The great object now was to get the towns to vote right. When the subject came before the town meeting in Providence, I moved that a committee be appointed to prepare instructions to our representatives, and report at the present meeting. This was carried, and William Richmond, Samuel W. Bridgham, afterwards our first mayor, George R. Burrill, Wm. Larned, and myself, were constituted the committee. It was now late in the afternoon, and Bridgham, said, 'Mr. moderator, this is an important matter. It will require some time to draft instructions, and as it is now almost night, I think the subject had better be postponed until the next town meeting.' 'Never fear,' replied Richard Jackson, the moderator, 'I guess Howland has them already written in his pocket.' 'O,' rejoined Bridgham, 'I didn't think of that—then we can go on.' The committee accordingly retired to the office of George R. Burrill for consultation. The questions then came up, what shape shall the instructions take? Who shall write them? Various opinions were expressed, but I kept silent. Bridgham then turned to me and said, 'what do *you* think, Mr. Howland?' I had anticipated

* The members of the committee associated with Mr. Howland, and who uniformly cooperated with him, were Joel Metcalf, William Richmond, Peter Grinnell, Richard Anthony, Grindall Reynolds, Samuel Thurber, jr., and Nathan Fisher.

the course of events, and was prepared to answer the question. I had set up, the night before, till 11 o'clock, to prepare a document I intended to submit to the town meeting. I therefore said to the committee, 'I have got *my* opinion in my pocket. If you wish to hear, I will read it.' 'Let us hear, by all means,' was the reply. So I took out my document, and read it. When I got through, Burrill said, 'well, that is just what we want. All we need do is to sign our names.' They accordingly signed it, without suggesting any alteration, and we returned and reported it to the meeting. The paper was adopted by the town, as its instructions to its representatives.

"But though Providence was thus committed to the good work, the country towns generally were not so safe. In many, the movement was decidedly unpopular, and there was ground for apprehension that it might fail. One of the most influential men in the State councils was then a resident of Newport. I felt very anxious to secure the favorable expression of that town. I therefore wrote to the town clerk, urging him to get an article inserted in the warrant for the town meeting, to instruct their representatives to vote for the bill before the Assembly. And so fearful was I that this precaution would be neglected, that I made a special journey to Newport to secure the measure. Much to my gratification, Newport voted for the instructions, and valuable services were rendered by Mr. Geo. Champlin, the principal representative from that town. Essential aid was also rendered by a member from Smithfield.

"At the autumn session, (1799,) the bill passed the House of Representatives, and was sent up to the Senate. That body was afraid to pass it, and did not dare reject it. So with other unfinished business, they laid it over until the next session. The Assembly met in February in this town. I resolved to persevere in my efforts to get the school bill passed. I saw the secretary, and at my suggestion, he placed the deferred bill among the papers first to be called up.

"One day, in the early part of the session, I met Joel Metcalf, a man of strong good sense, who had interested himself in the matter of public schools. 'Come,' said I, 'you and I must go up to the Senate to-day and get them to call up the school bill.' 'Well,' he replied, 'I don't know as we can influence that honorable body.' 'We can try,' I responded. And so we went. We saw John Innis Clarke, a senator, and told him our errand. 'Well,' said he, 'the governor and senate are to dine with me to-day, and I will do what I can to secure favorable action.' We left, and went up to the senate chamber in the afternoon. As soon as I opened the door, Clarke rose and came to me, and said, 'the school bill has just passed.' 'Was it opposed?' I inquired. 'No,' he replied. 'I called it up, and it was passed without a word in opposition.' Thus we achieved our great State triumph—not of long duration indeed, as the act was repealed in 1803,—but long enough to secure a permanent blessing to Providence.

"I shall not confine my narrative to the strict order of dates, as I have no minutes of the events I am relating by me. My object is to give a brief view of the part I took in this work. The town resolved to establish four schools, three on the east, and one on the west side of the river. I was on a committee to carry out the design. Having made a motion in town meeting, June 3, 1799, that a committee be appointed to purchase the shares held by the proprietors of 'Whipple Hall,' and the brick school house, standing near the State house, I was made chairman, and entered at once upon my duties. The other members of the committee were Richard Jackson, jr., and John Carlile. Afternoon after afternoon, accompanied by Paul Allen, I traversed the north end in search of the proprietors.*

* The following is a list of the proprietors of Whipple hall, in 1781. Joseph Whipple, Benjamin Thurber, Edward Thurber, Obadiah Sprague, Job Smith, Charles Keene, David Burr, Coomer Hale, Daniel Cahoon, two shares each. Comfort Wheaton and John Smith,

Sometimes we found one at home, and another in the street. In this way, we picked up forty-five shares, at \$10 each—I making the contract, and Allen, as justice of the peace, legalizing it. Five of the old proprietors we never could find, nor could we ascertain who were their heirs. To this day, they have not been purchased. One of the proprietors, a sturdy, self-willed man, at first refused to sell. He 'wasn't going to educate other people's children.' But after being made to see that the system would go on, and his refusal would injure nobody but himself, (the town then owning over forty shares, and thus able to control the house,) he relented, and acceded to our terms. We next bought the brick school house. This was more easily done, as the principal number of shares was in the hands of Moses Brown, and the town already owned the land on which the building stood. These shares were purchased at \$10.50 each. It was not so easy, however, to obtain the lot wanted for a school house site at the south end. This land belonged to a gentleman who was unwilling to have a school of two hundred scholars so near his house and garden. I was not on the committee to make this purchase, but when I heard he had refused to sell, I went to see him. I asked the ground of his objections. He said if a school was established there, the neighborhood would be a perfect bedlam every time it was dismissed. Besides, his garden would be robbed of all its fruit. These were very natural fears. But I assured him they were groundless. Under our rules, the school would be dismissed by classes, and not permitted

one and one half shares each. Stephen Carpenter, Dexter Brown, Jonathan Arnold, Nathaniel Wheaton, Samuel Thurber, Timothy Mason, George Payson's heirs, Samuel Curry's heirs, Richard Jackson, Stukely Williams, Ezekiel Burr's heirs, John Pratt, Levi Burr, Nehemiah Sweet, John E. Brown's heirs, William Tyler, James Olney's heirs, Aaron Mason, Ephraim Wheaton, Olney Winsor, George Whipple, Abner Thayer, Solomon Owen, Benjamin Cozzens, Joshua Burr, Amos Allen, Edward Knowles, Benjamin Allen, Peter Randall, one share each.—Total, 50.

to loiter about the premises, and as to his garden, so strict a watch would be kept over the scholars, that his fruit would be safer than ever. I cannot repeat all my arguments on the occasion. It is sufficient to say, that before I left him, he consented to sell.

“Some time after, when the schools had gone fairly into operation, the town council, accompanied by the school committee, made their first visit to this school. When opposite his residence, I requested the company to pause till I went in and invited him to go with us. They did so. I went in, and said, ‘I have been deputed by the honorable town council and the school committee, to invite you to accompany them in their first visit of examination to the Transit street school.’ He appeared gratified with the attention, and readily complied with our invitation. I will not say there was not a little policy in this. At all events, it had a good effect. Our skeptical friend was delighted with all he saw and heard, and was ever after a firm supporter of the public schools.

“Among the exercises of this occasion, was a poetic address made to the gentlemen of the honorable council and committee. It was written by Paul Allen, and spoken by a lad nine years of age.

[We give the address below.]

GENTLEMEN OF THE HON. COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE:

Heroes of ancient and modern days
Have challenged, and receiv'd, the palm of praise,
The favored poets will their deeds rehearse,
And blazon forth their destiny in verse.
A more exalted task your time employs,
To watch the morals of the rising boys,—
To teach their wandering feet to tread the road
That leads direct to virtue's bright abode—
To check the sallies of impetuous youth,
And in their bosoms plant the seeds of truth.
No more shall avarice presume to blind
With her dark shades, the eyesight of the mind,
Nor shall presumptuous ign'rance dare enslave

Those talents which the God of nature gave.
The tribute that from gratitude is due,
Our hearts rejoicing fondly pays to you;
Unostentatious virtue seeks the shade,
And by its own success is amply paid;
Thus the fair stream with silent steady force,
Through the long meadows winds its devious course,
And in its route, itself unseen the while,
Surveys the verdure spread and flow'rets smile,
Till all the meads in sweet luxuriance grow,
And tell the wonders of the stream below :
Thus, while *you* wish industrious to conceal,
Those virtues gratitude would fain reveal,
The morals of the rising youth shall tell
The names of those whose deeds deserve so well.
Why should my infant tongue these deeds relate?
Your future glory shall adorn the State,
When Patriots yet unknown shall tread the stage,
And shame the parties of the present age.

“ It was clear, that to carry out our system successfully, a larger sum of money than hitherto appropriated for schools must be secured. Here we experienced the strongest opposition, and were in greatest danger of defeat. I moved, in town meeting, for an appropriation of \$4,000. Some said it was too much, and others, hoping to defeat the motion, opposed it on the ground that the sum was insufficient. After listening some time to the discussion, I rose and said, that as there appeared to be a difference of opinion in the meeting, with a view to obviate the last objection, I would move the insertion of \$6000 in the place of \$4000, first proposed. This was seconded by one of the opponents, thinking thereby to give the motion its quietus. Much to his surprise, however, the motion was adopted. When the result was announced, great excitement prevailed. Two of the strongest opponents came up to me and said, ‘ you have taken us in—you have taken us in—we didn’t intend to vote you so much money.’ ‘ You have taken yourselves in, and I am glad of it,’ I replied. This agitation of the school matter induced many of the mechanics to attend town meeting, and take an active part in town affairs, who never went before.

"April 16, 1800, the town appointed James Burrill, jr., John Corliss, Richard Jackson, jr., John Carlisle, Joel Metcalf, William Richmond and myself, a committee to devise and report a plan for carrying the school act into effect. This plan I drew up. It was reported to an adjourned town meeting, April 26th, and adopted.

"The first school committee under the act of the General Assembly, was chosen in August, 1800. It consisted of President Maxcy, Rev. Dr. Gano, Rev. Dr. Hitchcock, David L. Barnes, Jabez Bowen, Amos M. Atwell, James Burrill, jr., William Jones, John Carlisle, and myself.—The town council, in conjunction with this body, appointed a sub-committee to draw up rules and regulations for the government of the schools. On this committee were President Maxcy, Rev. Dr. Hitchcock, and Rev. Dr. Gano. When nominated, Dr. Gano said the schools had his warmest wishes for success, but as he was not much acquainted with the matter, and as Mr. Howland had done so much, and understood the wants so well, he would decline in his favor. His wish was complied with, and I was placed on this important committee.

"When the work of drawing up the rules came to be done, to my surprise, the burden of the labor was assigned to me. President Maxcy was pressed with the cares of the college, and could not conveniently attend to the duty. Dr. Hitchcock's health was declining, and though warmly devoted to the cause of education, was unable to give the subject the attention it deserved. So it was left for me to go on with it. This was rather a formidable undertaking, but as I had the approbation of the literary gentlemen, I boldly put my hand to the work. To aid me in the matter, I sent to Boston, and procured the rules established there, and also a list of the books used in school. After my rules and regulations were prepared, I submitted them to the committee and town council. They were accepted, and adopted October 16th, less than two months after my appointment.

"Up to this time, I had never seen a grammar—a sorry confession for a school committee man, some may think—but observing that 'The Young Lady's Accidence' was used in the Boston schools, I sent to the principal bookseller in that town, and purchased one hundred copies for the use of ours. For whatever accuracy I have obtained in writing, I am indebted to observation and practice.

"The introduction of grammar was quite an advance in the system of education, as it was not taught at all except in the better class of private schools. The same was true of geography, which had never been taught before. Geographies could not be bought in this town, so I sent to Boston and purchased as many as were wanted for our schools. Dr. Morse, of Charlestown, had published the first volume of his geography, and that was the work we adopted. Many thought it an unnecessary study, and some in private objected to it because it would take off their attention from arithmetic. But it met with no public opposition.

"To some, this recital may seem egotistical. But I have no such feeling. I was so constantly connected with the school movement, that I cannot speak of it without speaking of myself. I take no improper pride in the part I acted. If better educated and more influential men had seen fit to take the lead, I should have been contented to follow. But I felt that somebody must do the work, and as others would not, I resolved that I would. I thank a kind Providence that I have been able, in my humble way, to be of service to my fellow men; and I wish to occupy no other place in their memories, or the page of history, than that which truth shall assign me."

Such is the unstudied narrative of the part borne by the subject of these pages, in laying the foundation of a work that has given to Providence a proud pre-eminence, and placed Rhode Island as a faith-

ful guardian of the intellectual interests of her youth, among the foremost States of the Union. The names of Hopkins, Bowen, Brown, Jones, Burrill, Jackson, Nightingale and Jenckes, of Hitchcock, Gano, Maxcy, Bridgham, Ives, Rhodes, Smith, and Barnes, with many others of like spirit, will ever be held in grateful remembrance for the interest they early exhibited in the sacred cause of education. Without the sympathy and coöperation of such minds, little could have been accomplished. But to the mind that from its own fertile resources, originated plans, combined influences, organized popular sentiment, and by its indomitable energy carried forward to ultimate triumph this great enterprize, a distinct acknowledgment is due. And, "if hereafter," to use the words of one often quoted in this volume, "it shall be asked who was the Father of the free school system in Rhode Island, and any *one* shall be thought worthy of the honor—who will it be?"*

For twenty years Mr. Howland, as a member of the school committee, discharged the duties of his office with scrupulous fidelity, and retired only when the demands upon his time as town treasurer, and treasurer of the Savings Institution, suggested the necessity of release from some of his public responsibilities. But though withdrawn from active participation in the management of the schools, he was ever observant of their progress. Standing, as they do, to use his own language, "on the solid base of equal rights, and on the enlightened and

* Dr. Hall's Discourse.

liberal views of the citizens of Providence," he found heartfelt satisfaction in every indication of their increasing prosperity. He was frequently addressed from abroad, asking for information in relation to them, which he promptly furnished. In 1824, the Providence system had attained to such a point of success, as to attract the attention of the friends of education in Newport, and led to the following correspondence showing the confidence reposed in his intelligence, and furnishing interesting details of the schools at that period.

NEWPORT, Sept. 16th, 1824.

TO MR. JOHN HOWLAND,

Town Treasurer of Providence :

SIR :—The good people of Newport, having set themselves seriously to work to establish free schools for the education of the youth of this town,—have appointed the subscribers a committee to collect such information as may be useful to them. We have been informed that you were very instrumental in the establishment of the free school system, which at present exists in Providence, and therefore have concluded that you can furnish all the information we want. Our wish is to be made minutely acquainted with the whole system ; but, for your convenience, we will mention a few of the prominent inquiries :

Of how many pupils does a school consist? Are there one or more masters to a school? At what age are pupils admitted? At what age discharged? Are females admitted? Does the method of instruction differ from that practiced in ordinary schools? and in what? What branches are taught in these schools? What is the expense of each and all the free schools in Providence? If it will not give you too much trouble, we should like to be

informed of the expense of erecting a school house in your town. Say of what materials.

We have been also informed, that within a few years past a school has been established in Providence on the Lancasterian plan. We wish to know what has been its success.

Any remarks you will give yourself the trouble to make on this subject, will be acceptable. We should particularly desire that you say something on the effect of these schools on the society of Providence.

Yours, with great respect,

RICHARD K. RANDOLPH, } Committee.
DUTEE J. PEARCE, }

TO RICHARD K. RANDOLPH AND DUTEE J. PEARCE, Esqs.

PROVIDENCE, Sept. 20, 1824.

Gentlemen :—Your communication, dated 16th instant, was duly received, and the intelligence it affords that the good people of my native town have set themselves seriously to work to establish public schools, will render a compliance with your request the greatest pleasure. The preparatory measures towards establishing the system in this town, resulted from the provisions of an act of the General Assembly, passed in 1800, for the encouragement of public schools throughout the State. This act placed the power of commencing and carrying the system into effect, principally in the several town councils; and although the act of the State was repealed in less than two years after it had passed, yet the town never withdrew the powers confided by the town to the town council in the first instance in conformity to the State law, being satisfied they could devise no better method. Before the system was completed, the town, on request of the town council, appointed a school committee, (at first consisting of twelve) to attend with them in the visitation of the schools, and whom the council uniformly notify to attend with them in

any consultation on measures to be adopted relative to the schools.

The town was at first divided into four, at present into five school districts; two old school houses were purchased of proprietors, and three new ones have been built, two of brick and one of stone. During the time the new houses were building, and the old ones repairing, a sub-committee devised and reported the rules for the government of the schools, and designating the books to be used. The rules as first established are continued with little variation, but changes have been made in the books, as new ones have appeared better adapted. The appointment and removal of the masters and ushers, remain solely with the town council, though in the appointment of the master to fill a vacancy, (as there are generally several applicants,) the school committee are convened with the council, and the qualifications of the candidates discussed.

Presuming these preliminary observations may come within the scope of your inquiries, I now proceed to answer, as correctly as possible, the special interrogations :

1st. *Of how many pupils do the schools consist?* The average number in the winter season is about nine hundred, in summer eight hundred; the school houses are calculated to accommodate two hundred each.

2d. *Are there one or more masters to a school?* One master and one usher to a school.

3d. *At what age are pupils admitted, or at what age discharged?* The children are admitted at the age of six years, the time of continuance not limited. Before the establishment of the public schools, the means of education were very limited, and on their being opened, the scholars were of all ages between six and twenty; there are now but few over fourteen years, mostly from six to twelve. Although the age for admission, as a general rule, is six years, yet the preceptors receive some under that age, when they belong to a family from which older

children attend; but when the number in a school is two hundred or more, which has frequently been the case, then all under six are excluded.

4th. *Are females admitted?* Females are admitted.—The school rooms have an aisle, lengthwise through the middle, the boys occupy one side, the girls the other; the floors rise from the side of the broad alley to the walls, and there is a desk and a seat for every two scholars; the size of the room is 50 by 30 feet.

5th. *Does the method of instruction differ from that practised in ordinary schools?* The method of government and instruction differ materially from that practised in schools before, or at the time the public schools were established. The old pedagogue system of the cow-skin and the ferule, is laid aside. The government partakes more of the paternal character; the boys have the appellation of masters, and the girls of misses; emulation is excited by promotion to a higher class, and by public commendation of the preceptor, of particular instances of attention to order or improvement. The upper class of boys are supposed to be in the character of young gentlemen, and the misses are addressed as young ladies. After all, the application of the general system of government depends much on the peculiar qualifications and address of the preceptor; he is not addressed by the term *master*, that is applied exclusively to the boys. The number of males exceed the number of females, probably about one-fifth through the winter, but in the summer season they are nearly equal.

6th. *What are the branches taught?* This may be answered generally, by an extract from the first regulation, viz: "The principal part of the instruction will consist in learning spelling, accenting, and reading, both prose and verse, with propriety and accuracy, and a general knowledge of English grammar and composition; also, writing a good hand, according to the most approved rules, and arithmetic," &c.

7th. *What is the expense of each and all the free schools in Providence?* Five masters, at \$500 per year,

each,	-	-	-	-	\$2,500
Five ushers, at \$250 each.	-	-	-	-	1,250
					<hr/> \$3,750

To this may be added necessary repairs of school houses, stove pipes, &c., and a few books furnished occasionally to poor children by the town council.

8th. *What are the results of the system?* As to the effect which the public schools have had on the state of society, the evidence must be circumstantial, as it is impossible to tell what would have been the case had they not been established; but the circumstances are so numerous and coincident, that they appear to establish the fact beyond a doubt, that they have been highly beneficial. Many of our citizens who pay through the tax collector for their support, and who, having no children of their own to instruct, cared but little about the education of others, from their observation of the good effect of the schools in their own neighborhood, or in the town at large, are now among the most zealous for their support. There are now among our most active and valuable citizens, merchants, mechanics, manufacturers, and masters of ships, who were poor boys, without other means of instruction, and who owe their present standing, and in some instances large property, entirely to the education and manners acquired in these public schools.

Two schools on the Lancasterian plan are now in operation in this town, by individuals from abroad, without any support from the town. This is matter of experiment. They are well spoken of, and I think will be useful for children who have been altogether without instruction. In these they can commence the first rudiments, and be prepared to take their places in the other schools to more advantage. A committee, appointed by the town at April meeting,

made a report highly favorable to the plan in June. They were continued, and probably will, at a future meeting, recommend one school on the plan of Lancaster, for the support of the town.

I have not, at present, a moment's time to review what I have written, or to add any further details or remarks. With the best and most ardent wishes that the gentlemen who have begun the good work in Newport, may persevere in the good cause to the great benefit and everlasting honor of the place of my birth, I remain

Your obedient servant,

JOHN HOWLAND.

In 1829, in answer to inquiries then made, he returned the following reply :

TO CAPT. GEORGE HOWLAND.

PROVIDENCE, June 10, 1829.

Dear Sir :—I received your communication, three days ago, requesting information relative to the public schools in this town. I have not had time to attend to it before. I do not wonder at your surprise at the different systems adopted by Newport and Providence, you having been brought up here, and received instruction in the public schools. Twenty-eight or twenty-nine years ago, the town established public schools sufficient for the instruction of all the children, of both sexes. The school houses were built, or purchased at the expense of the town, and the salaries of the instructors are paid out of the town treasury. The town is divided into five school districts, in each of which there is a school house, with a master, or principal instructor, and an usher. The salary of each master is five hundred dollars, and of the usher, two hundred and fifty dollars. About two years since, there was in addition to the above, five primary or women's schools established, one in each district, for the small children to

be taught the alphabet, and to be able to read and spell properly. The salary of the mistresses in each of these schools is a hundred and seventy-five dollars per year.—		
In two of these primary schools, the teacher has an assistant, at a less salary. Agreeably to the report of the school committee, at the late June town meeting, the amount of		
all the salaries is	- - -	\$4,596.46
Estimated contingent expenses for repairs of		
school houses, stove pipes, premiums of re-		
wards to children, &c., &c.,	-	\$160.00
Total,		<hr/> \$4,756.46

By the new State law, for the encouragement, or rather for the *discouragement* of schools, each town is to receive a small sum, annually, from the State treasury, and are allowed to assess a small sum, I don't recollect how much, in a town tax for the same purpose. This limitation, beyond which the towns are prohibited from assessing, was passed in the General Assembly by the influence of members who were opposed to the general instruction of the children throughout the State, and wished to confine it to paupers. But the town of Providence insisted on their right to assess as much as they pleased, or thought necessary for the support of their schools, and sufficient for the education of all the children in town, and this privilege was reserved to us in the State law, but it is allowed to no other town in the State. The rich men of Providence are and always have been in favor of all the children being educated at the town's expense, and if a representative of this town, in the General Assembly, should oppose this system, he would never be sent to the Assembly again.— But it does not altogether depend on rich men in this town. The Mechanics' Association consists of three hundred members, most of whom are voters, and all in favor of the schools. The number of children at the last quarterly

visitation in our public schools, was twelve hundred and seventy-seven.*

With respect and regard, yours,

JOHN HOWLAND.

Mr. Howland's last direct communication with the public schools was on the fourth of July, 1854, four months preceding his decease. On the morning of that day, too feeble to go abroad, he stood at his door, and with apparent enjoyment gazed upon the pupils of the Arnold street school, as they passed to join the floral procession of the united schools, which constituted the principal feature of the municipal celebration. The scene revived memories, both of his youth and early manhood. He spoke of the struggle for civil liberty in which he had participated, warming as he mentioned the venerated name of Washington, and of the present advantages for obtaining an education unknown in his childhood. Referring to the day, and the part to be taken by the schools in its commemoration, he said, "I should like to be there, but my declining strength forbids." He then, to one who had been requested to address the children, furnished the following sentiment, which he desired might be offered in his name :

"Rhode Island and her Schools—may she ever guard the integrity of her rights, and may her schools raise up patriots for her defence to the latest generations."

Appropriate words with which to close the watch care of more than half a century.

* For a further history of the schools in Providence, including an elaborate report, drawn up by President Wayland, in 1828, relating to alterations and improvements in the school system, the reader is referred to Barnard's Rhode Island Public School Reports and Documents, for 1848.

Mr. Howland's interest in the common school cause, did not withdraw his attention from the higher educational institutions of the town. With the history of Brown University, few not connected with it, were so familiar. "In May, 1770, one month after my arrival," he says, "the college which had been located in Warren, was removed to Providence. Rev. James Manning, the president, and David Howell, the tutor, were the only officers. The first commencement had been holden in Warren in 1769. There were only four in the senior class when they arrived here. The commencements for the first five years were held in Mr. Snow's meeting house, that being then the largest in the town. Governor Wanton always attended from Newport, till governor Cooke succeeded him. He headed the procession with the president. The governor's wig, which had been made in England, was of the pattern and size of that of the Speaker of the House of Commons, and so large that the shallow crowned hat could not be placed on his head without disturbing the curls. He therefore placed it under his left arm, and held his umbrella in his right hand. This was the first umbrella ever seen carried by a gentleman in Providence, though they had been some time in use by ladies on a sunny day. Governor Wanton was the most dignified and respectable looking man we had ever seen. The white wig of president Manning was of the largest dimensions usually worn in this country.

"This year (1770,) the materials were procured and the college edifice erected. William Wheaton

was the master mason. John Brown laid the corner stone. This stone was the first laid in the foundation at the bottom of the cellar wall, at the south west corner. On Dr. Manning's taking up his abode here, he lived in the old house of Benjamin Bowen, which stood on the lot at the foot of Bowen street, on which Mr. S. N. Richmond's brick house now stands. Mr. Howell was unmarried, and boarded. The students boarded in private families, at one dollar and a quarter per week. There they studied, and at certain hours met in one of the chambers of the old brick school house, with the officers, for recitation."

Dr. Manning was a customer of Mr. Gladding, and by the suavity of his manners, and the kindness of his tones, won the affections of the young apprentice. The acquaintance then formed, in later years ripened into an intimacy and friendship, broken only by death. Dr. Manning died suddenly, July 29th, 1791, and was widely mourned as a devout and eloquent christian minister, and an eminently successful instructor. Brief obituary notices of his decease appeared in the newspapers of the day, but no extended memoir was attempted until 1815, when Mr. Howland, desirous of testifying his respect for the memory of his distinguished friend, wrote a biographical sketch, which was published in the Rhode Island Literary Repository for January, of that year.

In 1835, the Board of Fellows of Brown University, conferred on Mr. Howland the honorary degree of Master of Arts—a voluntary testimony to

private worth, and to service rendered to the cause of learning. The announcement on commencement day, took him by surprise. Up to that moment he had not been aware that such a token of respect was in contemplation.

CHAPTER VIII.

It had been the good fortune of Mr. Howland to witness the successful termination of a colonial war, to sustain which Providence "contributed its full proportion of men and means."* He had watched with anxious interest the progress of measures to ensure a permanent union of the States; and from the formation of the Federal Constitution until its final adoption by each of the thirteen colonies, he had made himself familiar with the ideas and reasonings of those who objected to the establishment of a general government.

Although among the earliest to declare against oppression, and to strike a blow for freedom, Rhode Island was the last of the States to enter the union. This delay was not owing to lukewarmness towards the principles for which her treasure and blood had

* Staples' Annals.

been freely poured out, or to an unwillingness to share the responsibilities of such a confederacy, but in part, at least, to a wide spread apprehension that the rights of the State might thereby be compromised, if not subverted. Public feeling was very nearly equally divided. On the part of the opposition, Mr. Howland says, it was maintained that the constitution ensured "an iron government," and that if adopted, the people of Rhode Island would become "slaves to Virginia"—that she being the largest State, "would rule the whole"—that "the power to order taxes would be exercised without limits"—and that "we should have a land tax and impost to pay the Congress and a host of officers, &c., &c." "But the sore place after all," he adds, "was that no State could make any thing a tender but silver and gold, though this was not urged."

As fears of a centralized power rose, the hold upon State sovereignty became more tenacious. But whatever ground, real or imaginary, there might have been for these apprehensions, it was clear to all that the interests of the State were suffering by the delay. "This complete independent State sovereignty," says Mr. Howland, "was a trying season for us. The United States could treat us only as a foreign power. A Custom House was established on the east side of Pawtucket bridge, at which every cart, wagon or horse, which bore any goods across, was obliged to enter and pay the United States duties. To balance this, our nation assessed the same duties, and a Custom House was opened at the west end of the bridge, at which every wagon

from Boston was obliged to exhibit its manifest. If a packet to New York carried some hogsheads of lime, the captain being from a foreign country, had to go through the searching operation, and pay the ad valorem. During this state of things, people began to move from Rhode Island into the United States. We were then pressed into a small compass. At last, a small majority in our lower House passed a bill ordering a convention to meet, and decide either to adopt or reject the Constitution. On this bill coming before the Senate it was a tie, and governor Collins turned it in favor of concurrence. The convention in June following, by two majority, adopted the Constitution, and Rhode Island became one of the United States."

In the prevalent fears, before referred to, Mr. Howland never shared. He had studied the subject too thoroughly, and understood its merits too well, to suffer himself to be alarmed, or his views to be changed by any arguments, however specious; and from the beginning, both in the Mechanics' Association and elsewhere, he labored unceasingly to correct misapprehensions, and to create a favorable public sentiment. In common with many of the most discerning minds of the day, he looked upon the union of the States as vital to the perpetuity of the advantages gained by the revolutionary struggle. In the Constitution, he saw an instrument that limited the powers of government "to concerns interesting to the whole people, leaving the internal administration of each State, in peace, to its own constitution and laws, provided that they should be

republican, and interfering with them as little as should be necessary in war. With a vivid remembrance of the price at which freedom had been purchased, his attachment to the union increased as life advanced, and when, in the heat of sectional excitement, some years before his decease, men of a later generation began to talk flippantly of "calculating its value," the language seemed to him little else than treason. Frank and outspoken as was his habit, he took no pains to conceal his feelings. Reposing implicit confidence in the wisdom and patriotism of the founders of the American Republic, he believed they deserved to be held in everlasting gratitude for undertaking, in the words of Mr. Madison, "to do that which had always before been believed impossible." And he ever looked back "to the principles of Washington and his administration, and to the unbroken faith of the Constitution, for the source of that prosperity which no variation of seasons can wither, and that happiness which no reverse of fortune can turn into bitter disappointment."

The vote of the State Convention at Newport, adopting the Constitution, was taken on Saturday afternoon, May 29, 1790. The intelligence was received in Providence about 11 o'clock the same evening, and was announced by the ringing of bells, and a Federal salute from the Warren, Indiaman, owned by Messrs. Brown & Francis, and from the artillery park on Federal Hill. The next evening the Providence delegates arrived home, and were welcomed by "the joyful roar of artillery." But

these demonstrations only partially expressed the prevailing feeling, of which Mr. Howland strongly partook, and the Tuesday following was assigned for a more extended commemoration. At sunrise flags were displayed, and thirteen guns were discharged by the artillery company, which paraded under the command of colonel Daniel Tillinghast. At noon another salute was fired, after which the company, with distinguished gentlemen of the town, partook of an elegant entertainment prepared for them, at the residence of colonel T. Just before the guests sat down to the table, the colonel came to Mr. Howland, and requested him to write thirteen toasts for the occasion, as none had been prepared. To this he demurred, and referred his commander to the "gentlemen of education" present, as better qualified to perform such service. But refusal was vain. "You have always written toasts for public celebrations," said the colonel; "you must do it now, and there is no time to be lost." Supplied with writing materials, he obeyed. The house was thronged, and a seat at a table could not be had. His alternative was the stairs. Seating himself there, amid the noise and pressure of the crowd, he began to write, and before the tables were filled by the company, had produced the following,* which were responded to by hearty cheers,

*"Like all who are willing to work, he had work enough put upon him; and an amusing instance has been told of his readiness and tact, when, on some occasion, the business committee [of the Mechanics' Association] having failed to prepare a report which they were bound to make, half indignant and half in sport, he took up a blank sheet, and read off the report with such ease and emphasis, that all present either supposed it to be written, or were ashamed that they had not done it themselves."—*Dr. Hall's Discourse.*

and published in the account of the proceedings of the day :

1. The President of the United States.
2. The Senate and Representatives of the United States.
3. The Governor and Company.
4. The Rhode Island Convention that completed the union of America.
5. May the union last till years shall cease to roll.
6. Peace at home and reputation abroad.
7. May the groans of the distressed be heard no more.
8. May America forever honor the men who have led her to her present happy situation.
9. Agriculture, Manufactures and Commerce.
10. The Encouragers of Useful Arts.
11. The abolition of party.
12. May the good of the whole be the great object.
13. May private virtue be the road to public honor.

At three o'clock the salute was repeated, a procession with drums beating and colors flying, marched through the streets, and a discharge of thirteen cannon closed the day. In the evening, the Warren was brilliantly illuminated, and a number of rockets were let off from the Great Bridge by the artillery.

Thus happily terminated the painful suspense in which the citizens of Providence had been held, and "one sentiment of joy seemed to pervade the whole town. The cloud which had for so long a time overshadowed us, now passed away. Confidence was restored, business revived, and our members had the high satisfaction of reflecting, that in this they had done their duty to their country and to themselves."* This "sentiment of joy"

* Address before the Mechanics' Association, 1825.

springing from the completion of "the union of America," was partaken of, even by those who held back to the last. "Many of the anti's, I know," says Mr. Howland, "were glad of the adoption, though they were so pledged to the opposition that they did not dare act for it. Governor Fenner told me that he was glad, as we had got clear of the contention which had lasted long enough."*

"When the vote of adoption had passed in the Convention," Mr. Howland continues, "it became the duty of the president to notify the president of the United States. Colonel Barton was made bearer of the letter, and subsequently obtained the office of surveyor in our Custom House. Col. Jeremiah Olney, who had commanded one of our State regiments of the continental line, was appointed collector in Providence, and Theodore Foster, naval officer; but on the meeting of the General Assembly which was immediately called, Mr. Foster was appointed senator of the United States, together with Joseph Stanton, of Charlestown. Mr. F. was a federalist. Stanton was an anti. On the elevation of Mr. Foster to the Senate, Judge Thompson was appointed naval officer, which place he held till his death. He was a respectable, gentlemanly man, and my particular friend and neighbor. He cared nothing about the parties or politics of the day."

* "Many members of the Convention were convinced of the propriety of an adoption of the Constitution, and the majority would, it appears, have been much larger had not a number of the members been restricted by instructions. Had it been compatible with the public good to have adjourned the decision for a short time only, those instructions would undoubtedly have been reversed."—*Providence Gazette*, June 5, 1790.

With Mr. Foster, Mr. Howland was on terms of intimacy, and while in Congress maintained a familiar correspondence. Of the letters that then passed between them, only the following have been preserved. Apart from their amusing irony, they will have an interest for those familiar with the political occurrences of the times.

TO HON. THEODORE FOSTER.

PROVIDENCE, April 9, 1798.

Respected Friend :—The news!—the news!—the news!— we are wishing, wondering, gaping, staring, and stark mad for news! After hearing repeatedly of “existing circumstances,” “existing state of things,” and “existing difficulties,” we are impatient to hear of some existing new occurrence, that will relieve us from this anxious state of suspense, or enable us quietly to bear it. For this purpose, could you, sir, enclose me occasionally some of the papers, it would not only be conferring a favor on me, which gratitude would delight to keep in remembrance, but it would oblige the respectable corps of politicians who frequent my shop.

As to the state of opinions here, I believe thirty-nine out of forty are glad to find Mr. Sprigg’s motion twig’d by the Speaker ; but the tri-colored party, though small, have in some degree succeeded in making a new dictionary. For instance, they say the word embargo is the same that used to be spelt p-e-a-c-e, and that the word *arm* when applied to neutral merchant ships, means the same as the word *war*, and we can no more account for these whimsical assertions being propagated at the same time in places which have no connection with each other, than we can account for the yellow fever breaking out near the same time in different parts of the country, which have no connection with the focus of malignity ; but it is certain that

the same language manufactured here has likewise been made in several towns near Boston, and has had its effect in giving a majority for Heath for governor.

Owing to the bustle of national concerns and foreign relations, the people of this State have forgotten that their election approaches, and the governor will put himself and the rest of the Upper House in again without opposition. Thus some good will be derived from the evils of the present day.

With sentiments of high respect,

I am, sir, your humble servant,

JOHN HOWLAND.

HON. THEODORE FOSTER.

TO JOHN MR. HOWLAND.

PHILADELPHIA, April 16th, 1798.

Sir :—Your entertaining letter of the 9th inst., came to my hand on Saturday afternoon. To “twig Sprigg” by thirty-nine out of forty is great odds ! But that the tri-colored party, as you call them, should be able to make a new dictionary, and cause the word embargo to mean peace, and the word arm, when applied to neutral merchant ships to mean war, was hardly to be expected ; and that this new language which you say was manufactured at Providence, should be understood in several towns near Boston, and should operate to give general Heath a majority in the election for governor, because he dealt largely in the word embargo, under its new meaning, is unaccountable. A few members of Congress have learned and believed in the new signification of the words. I do not understand them as they do.

We read of the Prince of the power of the air. It is said that at certain periods he has an uncommon agency and ability to do mischief, in order that good may come out of evil, that all things work together for good to the righteous. Now though our prospects at present do not

look very pleasant, I have great confidence that heaven will avert the threatening storm, or will guide us safely through it. The United States have a glorious career before them, and their great destinies I believe are suited to it. We should never despair of the honor and happiness of our country when we have Washington and Adams to guide its councils.

I am told that there is a sort of inconceivable charm in a Philadelphia newspaper, in proportion to its distance from this great theatre of contention. I have therefore been solicited frequently for newspapers to send to Georgia Tennessee, the North Western Territory, and even to England and Scotland. I subscribe for two daily papers in addition to three I receive on public account, purposely to distribute among my acquaintances, and I know of none whom I ought to prefer "to the respectable corps of politicians who frequent your shop." I shall therefore with great pleasure comply with your request to send you some of them. I now send you Bradford's paper of this morning, and Porcupine's of March 19th, 29th and 30th, and April 2d, containing Mr. Harper's speech in reply to the speech of Mr. Gallatin, on the foreign intercourse bill, which has been printed in a large pamphlet, and undergone two editions, sold at a quarter of a dollar a copy.

Wishing you health and happiness, I am yours, &c.,

THEODORE FOSTER.

Some time after the adoption of the constitution, one pleasant 4th of July morning, governor Ephraim Bowen, Hon. John Brown, and several others, were assembled at Mr. Howland's shop. The anniversary of American independence had not then become an established holiday in Providence. While conversing on the events that had brought the confederated colonies into the family of nations,

Mr. Howland said, "a day of so much importance ought not to pass without notice; and since the town is doing nothing, let us have a celebration on our own account." "Agreed," was the response, and immediately contributions were made and the party divided into committees to carry the suggestion into effect. One was despatched for refreshments, another to purchase powder, and a third to "bring out the old town swivel." To Mr. Howland was assigned the duty of procuring flannel for cartridges. This was not easy of execution. Every store in town was visited without success. Not a fragment was to be had. While standing in the last store entered, pondering what to do, he saw a woman passing with an infant in her arms, wrapt in a flannel blanket. Here was a gleam of hope. In an instant he was in the street and at her side. "Excuse me, madam," he begun, at the same time pointing to the coveted garment, "I wish to buy this blanket." With a look of surprise, she replied, "it is not for sale." "I suppose so," he answered, "but you must let me have it, and I will tell you why. A number of us want to honor the day with a salute. We must have flannel for powder bags. I cannot get any at the stores, and your blanket is my only chance. Name your price, and here is your money." "But I don't wish to sell it," the woman responded. "Besides, it is the only one I have, and if I dispose of it, what shall I do for my child?" "O, you will find something as a substitute, no doubt," was the reply. Still she demurred. Her patriotism had not risen to that point of sacrifice. The vision of innocence robbed of its cradle

adjunct, and that, too, by maternal consent, was not altogether agreeable. Mr. Howland perceived that his case was growing desperate, but he was not the person to give up while a chance remained. "Come," said he, persuasively, "take this money and let me have the blanket," at the same time placing a generous sum in her hand. Whether it was sympathy for his perplexity, or the liberal price proffered, or both, that influenced her decision, is unknown. But she no longer hesitated. The garment became his, and hastening back with his prize, it was soon converted into receptacles for Baconian thunder. The "old swivel" spoke nobly the praises of freedom—the patriotic sentiment was oft repeated—the loud huzza "made the welkin ring"—and from thenceforth the nation's birth day has been honored with martial pomp and civic display.

CHAPTER IX.

The year 1789 was distinguished by the formation of the Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers. This association, whose history for sixty-seven years, has been identified with the industry, economy and popular education of both town and city, came into existence at a time when "every branch of industry was cramped and fettered," and there was neither credit nor money to stimulate enterprise. "They seemed like the great apostle to the gentiles, as one born out of due time, yet their appearance, like his, proved the precursor of many blessings."* They early sought by correspondence, to awaken and organize an influence in every part of the country, that would elevate and ennoble the character of mechanic arts, and secure from the national government a needed protection for home industry.

Within the first year of its existence, Mr. Howland became a member. He entered into its objects with an earnest spirit, and was early advanced to a leading position in its direction. His name is associated with many of its most important committees. He shrunk from no labor that

*Howland's Address, 1825.

tended to extend its usefulness. Besides the official correspondence bearing his signature, much that does not, together with numerous reports, were the products of his pen. Of the three memorials to Congress in behalf of manufactures, emanating from the association, he was the author, and each of these were accompanied by a letter from him to the members of Congress to whom they were severally entrusted.

Soon after the organization of the Federal government, the expediency of encouraging domestic manufactures engaged the attention of statesmen. The question was in some measure forced upon their notice by the peculiar condition of the country. "Europe offered but partial markets to our productions, while it closed its commerce to our marine. The annual value of our foreign exports, was less in amount than the annual value of our consumption of foreign commodities, and we possessed no collateral sources of wealth to compensate the deficiency. The government had assumed a large debt, which subjected it to a heavy annual interest. Their expenses were accumulating, the increase of which might be confidently anticipated; and the prospects of revenue from foreign commerce, or an impoverished people, were but gloomy. In these circumstances, the attention of our statesmen must have been directed to internal resources. Yet from this quarter could be derived little to inspire their hopes. Commerce brought no money into the country; circulation was limited and slow; the industry, or labor power of the country was but partially exerted;

and consequently much wealth lost, that might have been created. Without a circulating medium, and full employment for industry, revenue must have been oppressive to the people, of difficult collection to the government, and uncertain in its proceeds."*

All this was felt and acknowledged, yet upon a remedy leading minds were divided. Mr. Jefferson doubted the utility of attempting to build up a system of American manufactures. He thought a better method of increasing the national wealth would be to stimulate agriculture, and to exchange the products of the soil for the products of European workshops—a plan, which, at a later period, he discarded. On the other hand, Mr. Hamilton, though the avowed leader of the commercial portion of the community, favored domestic manufactures. From a higher stand point, he saw that while this branch of industry harmonized with the interests of agriculture and commerce, its successful establishment would be an important step taken to render the country independent of foreign nations. In 1790, while secretary of the treasury of the United States, he embodied his views in a report to Congress which has been justly pronounced "one of the most luminous and instructive public documents ever produced in this or perhaps in any other country."

To procure statistics and facts for the basis of his report, Mr. Hamilton had issued a circular calling upon associations and individuals in every part of the country for aid. A copy of this circular

*Remarks on Hamilton's Report.

was addressed to colonel John S. Dexter, Supervisor of the District of Rhode Island. Knowing Mr. Howland's habits of inquiry and his familiarity with the subject, colonel D. handed him the circular, with a request that he would furnish a reply, but ever considerate of the reputation and influence of the Mechanics' Association, Mr. Howland returned the document, and suggested its reference to that body as best fitted to give character to the answer. This he did, accompanying it with a letter, in which he says, "I cannot hesitate to whom I shall apply for the obtainment of the information requested in the enclosed copy of a letter I received a short time since, from the secretary of the treasury; for not only as it respects the State at large, but your society in particular, the subject must be considered as interesting." A copy of the same circular was also received from Hon. Theodore Foster.

To the request of Mr. Hamilton, the association gave ready response. Committees were chosen, statistics obtained, and a report prepared, which was transmitted to the secretary of the treasury through colonel Dexter. The part performed by each member of the committee in the work assigned them, does not appear on record; but it is known that a large amount of the active labor in collecting and arranging the statistics devolved on Mr. Howland, and there is reason for the belief, that the report as finally adopted by the association, was drafted by him. Intelligent on this subject beyond the opportunities of most others, and gifted as a "ready writer," such a work was doubt-

less considered a justifiable tax on his time, while his interest in the mechanical and manufacturing prosperity of the town, disposed him to perform it as a "labor of love." No one felt more deeply the importance of the object for which these facts were gathered, and no one believed more firmly than he, that, to quote his own words, "with the characters of our artisans and manufacturers the reputation of our country must stand or fall."

Mr. Howland's labors in behalf of manufactures were not limited to the transactions of the Mechanics' Association. In private and in public he co-operated with his townsmen in movements to secure the rights, and advance the prosperity of this important branch of industry.

The change that came over the prospects of manufactures at the close of the war with Great Britain, was peculiarly alarming to Rhode Island, which then contained ninety-nine cotton mills, with an aggregate of 75,678 spindles; especially as the hope of being sustained by governmental favor had become weakened. The act of Congress, approved January 18th, 1815, providing "additional revenue for defraying the expenses of government and supporting the public credit, by laying duties on various goods, wares, and merchandise manufactured in the United States," was felt by the manufacturers to be unnecessarily oppressive. With this conviction, a meeting was held at the State House in Providence, to consider and act upon their grievances. In this meeting Mr. Howland participated, and was appointed on a committee to draw up a

statement, with accompanying resolutions, expressive of its views, which were subsequently reported and adopted. This labor devolved on him. The statement sets forth, that in the act referred to, "we see an evident departure, not only from the spirit, but the very letter of the constitution." It declares that "every idea of justice as emanating from the equal rights of every profession and every occupation, must be abandoned, if these acts of Congress should meet the public approbation." It encourages a manifestation of "the public sensibility," lest silent endurance should be taken advantage of, and ultimately the state of society here "be changed to that of continental Europe, where, instead of the farmer, the manufacturer, and the merchant, the landlord and the soldier are the only prominent and efficient characters." Upon the back of the original document from which the foregoing quotations have been made, is this endorsement in Mr. Howland's hand-writing: "The manufacturers in Philadelphia and other places followed our example, in consequence of which Mr. Madison recommended a repeal of the act, which was done at the next session."

This subject was also taken up with great spirit by the Mechanics' Association. A memorial, one of the three before referred to, was drawn up, complaining of the "unjust and oppressive operation of the laws," and earnestly soliciting Congress to repeal them, as the only remedy for the evils they had engendered. It was placed in the hands of Hon. James B. Mason, a representative from Rhode Island, with the following letter, which, with three

others, are published as essential to complete the narrative :

PROVIDENCE, December 9th, 1815.

SIR :—The Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers confide to your care their memorial and petition to Congress, requesting you to present it to the House of Representatives as soon as convenient after you take your place therein.

You will not suppose, Sir, that our views are accomplished in troubling you with this service. We are ready to make higher demands on your politeness, friendship, and patriotism. If your views of the subject of complaint should accord with those of the association, which we would not doubt, we have to solicit the exertions and influence of yourself and of your honorable colleague in its progress through the House, or with the committee to whom it may be referred. To those members of Congress who may have paid little attention to the subject, some of the allegations in the memorial may appear overcharged. But it is believed that stubborn facts will warrant the utmost limit of their expression. On the obscurity of the law, and the contradictory instructions of the treasury department, we may adduce the fact, that the collecting officer of this district has already received seventeen different sets of instructions relative to his duty in executing the law, and for the government of those who are subjected to their intolerable grievance. We presume your knowledge of the details of these hardships and vexations, renders it unnecessary to add anything further on this head ; but we have one favor more to ask. If, in the course of the session, you can make it convenient to inform us of the progress or standing of this business, for the satisfaction of our committee, you will lay us under an additional obligation, which will be ever respectfully acknowledged.

JOHN HOWLAND,

Secretary Providence Association, &c.

HON.. JAMES B. MASON, Representative in Congress.

MR. MASON TO MR. HOWLAND.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 2, 1816.

Dear Sir:—The Committee of Finance, in their report offered a resolution to the House repealing the tax on articles of domestic manufacture, on the 18th day of April next. This resolution was agreed to in a committee of the whole, concurred in the House, and a bill brought in accordingly; but on its passage to a third reading, it was so amended as that the repeal is to take effect from and after the passing of the bill,—and so amended, it passed to be engrossed for a third reading. I have no doubt but the Senate will concur. This oppressive burden may then be considered as removed, as soon as the bill shall pass both Houses, and receive the signature of the President. I congratulate all who have suffered under its pressure. The committee of the whole this day agreed to report a resolution to the House fixing the direct tax at \$3,000,000.

I am, sir, respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

JAMES B. MASON.

JOHN HOWLAND, Esq.

Several days before the foregoing letter was received, Mr. Howland wrote again as follows:

MR. HOWLAND TO MR. MASON.

PROVIDENCE, Jan. 30, 1816.

Sir:—No mention having been made in the Congressional proceedings, as published in the papers, of the memorial and petition of the Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers, has occasioned a solicitude among many of our members respecting the course it has taken. Inquiries are frequently made, to what committee was it referred? Was it referred to the committee of Commerce and Manufactures, or to that of Ways and Means? Being unable to satisfy them on these points,

except by staking my own conjectures and suppositions as to its probable course, if you would seize a leisure moment to inform me I should be relieved from some embarrassment, and our committee and other members interested, would doubtless feel and acknowledge the obligation.

With high respect and regard,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN HOWLAND.

Hon. JAMES B. MASON,

Representative in Congress, Washington.

MR. MASON TO MR. HOWLAND.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 6, 1816.

Dear Sir :—I have received your letter of the 30th ult. I had the honor of presenting the memorial and petition of the Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers on the second day after taking my seat. It was referred to the committee of Ways and Means. Their report to the House on this subject was favorable. I had the honor to address you a few days since, in which I informed you of what had been done in the House in relation thereto. There can be no doubt that the Senate will pass the bill.

The House, on Saturday last, agreed to the report of the committee of the whole, fixing the direct tax at three millions. Yesterday, a motion was made to reconsider, agreed to, and the subject is now again under debate. I presume it will again be settled at three millions, although the majority will be small.

I am, sir, with high respect,

Your obedient servant,

JAMES B. MASON.

JOHN HOWLAND, Esq.

The tariff question which agitated the country in 1842, was taken up by the Mechanics' Asso-

ciation, at their annual meeting, April 11th of that year, and referred to a committee, of which Mr. Howland was chairman. At the next meeting the committee reported a declaration "relative to the importance of increasing the duties on the importation of foreign manufactures," which was unanimously adopted, and a copy, signed by the president and secretary, was directed to be transmitted to each of the senators and representatives in Congress, with a request that it should be laid before that body. This "declaration" was drawn up by Mr. Howland. It set forth the claims of manufacturing and mechanical interests to adequate protection, and the full confidence expressed by Washington that such would be the course of the national legislature. It adverted to the distress that had fallen on manufacturers, and had "reached the whole of our commercial and agricultural community," in consequence of a departure from this principle, and concluded by affirming that "if Congress should any longer delay to recur to the principles and practice of the framers of our government, the result would prove too calamitous and absorbing to be contemplated by any one who feels the value of a peaceful enjoyment of our social privileges."

According to direction, this declaration was forwarded to Hon. Joseph L. Tillinghast, accompanied by a letter from Mr. Howland. It is much to be regretted that this letter, of which no copy was preserved, has shared the fate of other valuable correspondence. It would doubtless have presented his matured thoughts on a topic which then

divided the opinions of legislators and statesmen, and shown with what steadfastness, through all the mutations of parties, he had adhered to the principles inculcated by Washington and Hamilton. In reference to this letter, Mr. Tillinghast, writing to a friend on the feeling prevalent in Congress, and the probable course of action, says, "Tell my good friend Mr. Howland, when you see him, that I fully intended to write him a reply to his excellent letter, full of wisdom and historical truth, which accompanied the memorial of the Mechanics' Association, but I was so situated at the time that I was obliged to content myself with doing here the thing that he desired should be done. I had the memorial received by the House, and printed in the *Intelligencer*." We close this account, with the following extracts of a letter relating to early manufactures, written by Mr. Howland, in the ninety-first year of his age:

TO ELISHA DYER, ESQ.

PROVIDENCE, March, 1848.

Dear Sir:—You will perceive that in the address delivered before the Association, I spoke of the first establishment and the gradual progress of the manufactures of the eastern colonies. The manufactures there mentioned, were those necessary for the comfort of a poor people, settled in the wilderness of a cold and inhospitable climate. But you request an account of the origin and progress of the manufacture of cotton, which has now attained such perfection. Doubtless the book in your possession, written by, I cannot recollect who, and which I have never read, will tell you that Samuel Slater erected the first cotton mill, moved by water power, in the United States;

and that Slater, having married a daughter of Ozniel Wilkinson, of Pawtucket, the enterprising members of that family joined him in erecting several other mills, improved greatly from the first. To these first cotton mills, strangers were not admitted. The doors were kept closed, lest the secret of their construction should become public, and others be erected.

The first mill erected independent of the Slater concern, I believe was by William Potter. He was a carpenter by trade, and had for a short time worked in Slater's mill. Most of the water power hereabouts, was occupied by grist or saw mills. Potter, not being able to purchase one of them, bought a piece of land adjoining the little brook which runs out of Mashapaug pond. Here he built his mill, but as he was assured that the pond or brook would not furnish sufficient water during the twenty-four hours, he built a dam at the outlet of the pond, with a gate, to be closed at night to prevent the waste of water during that season, and had the full pond for the supply of his water-wheel the next morning.

For several years after the erection of the cotton mills, they only furnished the yarn. Weaving by water power had not then been invented. But this, perhaps, was the best and most profitable age of the cotton business. The yarn met a full demand and sale at a high price. Hundreds of new looms were built, and these, with the old ones, were used in different families who wove the yarn, sold the cloth to shop-keepers, and bought more yarn with the money. Some of the mills hired some old women to weave the yarn, for which they paid at first two-and-sixpence a yard. These operations furnished a useful and profitable employment to hundreds of families through the country, and during these operations the Slater and other mill owners, accumulated immense fortunes.

The manufacturers, both in England as well as in this country, were endeavoring to discover a mode of weaving

by water power. At length it was discovered. The old looms were abandoned, and the weavers left to starve.— This reduced the price of cotton shirting from fifty cents a yard to the present prices. The discovery of this new power is claimed by England, but improvements on it have been made in America, which have since been adopted in Europe. Many persons, on viewing its simple operations, have expressed a wonder why it was not known when the spindles were first in use. But it is in harmony with the divine wisdom and goodness, which overrules all things, that knowledge should be progressive. This extends to all the sciences with which we are acquainted, as well as to manufactures and the useful arts. The progress and increase of human knowledge does not move in masses.— An individual may arrive at great perfection in one art, to which he has given his attention, and yet be ignorant and foolish in everything else.

You doubtless know the Lyman mill, on the river which passes through Olneyville. It had five or six owners, men of good sense. They had heard that a discovery had been made in England of weaving by water power, when an Englishman told them he knew the secret. They employed him to introduce it into their mill, at a high price. He went to work. They paid for the materials, and watched his movements with attention; but month after month passed, and it never was accomplished. They drove the man off, and threw his lumber away, after a loss of more than \$1000, and continued to employ Ann Axel, and the other old women, to weave with the old looms. But the price was reduced from two-and-sixpence to two shillings a yard. After a while the secret was out; the power-looms were invented; the mills were multiplied; and the price went down to the present rate, so that we might compete with the manufacturers of Manchester. . . . I never was a manufacturer, or ever had any personal interest in manufactures, but still it has been my destiny

to have spoken and written volumes in favor of their protection. . . . But I have said enough, and hope you, my dear sir, will be able to read my now broken hand, on which old age has done its duty.

With great regard, yours, &c.,

JOHN HOWLAND.

In 1805, Mr. Howland was chosen secretary of the association, the duties of which office he faithfully discharged for a period of eighteen years. In 1823, he was chosen vice president, and in 1824, president of the association.

By an early arrangement, lectures were delivered before the association at its quarterly meetings. The first was read by Isaac Greenwood, and the second Jan. 14, 1799, by Mr. Howland. In this lecture, which was published, he reviewed briefly the progress of manufactures and the mechanic arts in foreign countries, their condition in our own, and concluded with an appeal in behalf of public schools, a subject that had long engaged his thoughts, and that received the undivided sympathy of his brother mechanics.

In 1810, he delivered a public address before a numerous audience, on the anniversary of the choice of officers. In this performance he ingeniously combats the idea inculcated by some writers, that in importance agriculture takes precedence of all other occupations. He repudiates the doctrine that arts, manufactures and commerce are entitled to encouragement and protection only as the handmaids of agriculture, and cites "the savages of the western wilderness" as a class who "could teach

us better than this." "Do we mean by this," he continues, "to say that the mechanic ranks above the farmer? We certainly do not. We contend for no such superiority; for in this we declare there is no first or second place." Advocating the mutual dependence of the various occupations and professions, he thus proceeds:

"If the mechanic arts struck into existence the first spark which illumined the dark and dreary night of the savage state, they are no less useful in aiding the progress of civilization. Philosophy and literature are indebted to the mechanic arts for their high improvements and present state of perfection. In accompanying philosophy in her sublime researches, they, like the wedded pair, are bound to promote each other's welfare till death shall separate them; *then*, indeed, there is this difference, that the death of one is the death of the other.

"Strike the type-founder, the printer and the manufacturers of paper and parchment, out of the system, and what would become of the republic of letters? Could Newton, a name which none can pronounce without the deepest veneration, have poured such a flood of light into the regions of science, without the help of the mechanic arts? Could Franklin have extracted the electric fluid from the clouds, if the paper-maker and the manufacturer of cordage had not furnished the materials for his kite? Could Rittenhouse, with all his skill in astronomy, have constructed the orrery which has placed him among the sons of fame, had he not served an apprenticeship to a cabinet maker? Could Bulfinch, with all his theory of architecture, have placed the superb State House on Beacon Hill, if the mason and the carpenter had not been there? Withdraw the axe, the hammer and the saw from the shipyard, and where would you look for the commerce of the world?

“ Let not this be represented as a partial view of the subject. With pleasure, and I may add with gratitude, we acknowledge the mutual obligations we are under. Allied to every thing that is of high estimation, we will support that rank which so evidently belongs to us; but let us at the same time consider, that the improved state of the mechanic arts and of manufactures is derived from improvements in experimental philosophy, and from scientific men—from the increased and still increasing light drawn from the schools, from academies and from universities—from commerce, which brings to every country blessed with a free trade, the inventions, the arts, and the improvements of every other. The mechanic and the manufacturer have ever felt the sympathies of relationship. In many things they are identified, in all things connected. What branch of manufactures can be established without the aid of the mechanic? And there is none which can proceed a step in its course without his support. Like the various ducts of the animal system in which the fluids of life are conveyed, and without which they would be but a congealed mass, the mechanic arts are the channels through which life and activity are conveyed to the most productive manufacture. What though there may be some who from inattention do not acknowledge this? Their inattention to this unavoidable connection no more operates upon the fact, than did the ignorance of the world respecting that vital principle, the circulation of the blood, before it was discovered and published by Harvey.

“ Civil society, the cement of which is the moral virtues, must, like a superb and stately edifice, be built up and constructed with various parts and of divers materials, ‘fitly joined together.’ The mechanic and manufacturer, the farmer, the merchant, the professors of the liberal and of the fine arts, all essentially contribute to form that improved state of society, which alone can render our condition comfortable and pleasing, and from which our ra-

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tional enjoyments proceed. It is highly gratifying, and worthy the benevolent mind, to view the connecting links of this golden chain, which binds the various interests to the public good. Like the parts of the human body, none can say to the other, I have no need of thee. Not only the different trades, but all the different branches of the various professions, and all the various subdivisions of the arts, are necessary to produce that state of society designed by our benevolent creator as the result of all our labors; that which shall induce us to render homage to his name, or stand self-condemned for the deepest ingratitude.

"It was a wise and benevolent design of the Deity which, in providing for our mutual wants, thus taught us our mutual dependence. From this state of dependence none of our race are exempt. If there should have been a solitary individual, wrapped in the mantle of self-importance, so weak as to say he was under no obligation to a fellow-man, the experience of the next moment would teach him his delusion."

In 1818, he again accepted an invitation to address the association, its anniversary being held in the "Tin Top" meeting house. This address, like its predecessors, with a becoming esprit de corps, pays a glowing tribute to the mechanic arts.

"The first impulse in the human mind, when man became the tenant and cultivator of the earth, was, probably, a desire to provide the comforts and conveniences of life; and the inspiration of the Deity, which first moved upon the face of the deep and brought the world into being, directed his efforts to obtain them through the means of mechanic art by the instruments of husbandry; and the feelings of devotion not being entirely extinguished by transgression, he was moved to build an altar for sacrifice or oblation.

“Of the progress made in the mechanic arts, in the first ages of the world, history and tradition afford but little light. Men, who subsisted in the pastoral state, and when the head of each family was the sovereign of his own little commonwealth, could have no inducement to carry them to any considerable degree of perfection. When the posterity of Jacob were called to be a nation, chosen and selected to renew, or to perpetuate the knowledge and worship of the one true God, the knowledge of the arts was communicated to them by immediate inspiration. In the structure of the tabernacle, and in the splendid costume of Aaron, the perfection of arts and manufacture were exhibited to the astonished tribes. That Being whom we adore as the perfection of wisdom, condescended to communicate, by his own spirit, to the favored son of Uri, “wisdom, and understanding, and knowledge, in all manner of workmanship.” Consecrated and venerable are the arts! May they never be prostituted by any member of this association to purposes of impiety or dishonor. The dignity and honor of professions which thus claim affinity with the first source of intelligence, should never be impaired in the hands of their professors.”

“The most glorious conquests have been achieved by the aid of the mechanic arts! Not the conquests of the warrior—but the victories which have been obtained over the disorders and depravity of the human mind. Contemplate for a moment, the degraded state of our remote ancestors, when afflicted by the military despotism of rival chiefs. When first broke the long established power of feudal servitude, and raised them from the degraded character of soldiers and vassals to the rank of freeholders and citizens? The incorporation of mechanics’ societies, in the reign of Richard I, was the first regular approach which was made; and arts, manufactures and commerce, stimulating the ardor of inquiry, have caused a new creation to

arise, in which we, their more favored children, enjoy peace, liberty, and safety.

“These are the triumphs which we this day celebrate. These were not achieved by sudden revolutions ; but every generation through the descent of several centuries, contributed its part to the gradual improvement. Every effort to enlighten and restore men to the enjoyment of those privileges which divine goodness has appointed as the means of far greater blessings, will acquire new energy from the consciousness that we are acting in accordance with the Supreme will, for the promotion of human happiness. Let every consideration then—let every view of a subject so connected and allied to every thing which is great and honorable, lead you to prize the faculties you possess as consecrated to truth and virtue. In this your individual interest and much of your private happiness depends.

“You have seen that the mechanic arts are the auxiliaries of religion, of civil liberty, and of universal peace ; and that they are intimately connected with all the comforts of the social state. With the characters of our artisans and manufacturers, the reputation of our country must stand or fall.”

Tracing the progress of the acts from their infancy among all nations, and adverting to the events of the past twenty years, as calculated to “accelerate the progress of civilization,” the address closes as follows :

“Commerce and the arts are now opening an amicable intercourse between all countries, and assimilating the manners, feelings and languages of all nations. Men will be induced to regard each other as brethren and friends.

“The system of Providence which appears in unfolding these events, is evinced to be the best possible system to

produce the happiness of man. This is a subject on which benevolence can dwell with delight. The prospect opens and expands before us. It reaches beyond the confines of this continent, and is not limited by the immense breadth of the ocean.

"In views so just, all Europe's powers combine,
"And the wide world approves the blest design."

"These views and these elevated hopes are as delightful as they are consolatory. Reason and true philosophy are gradually assuming their empire in the human mind. In every advance they make in the control of the human will, the assaults of passion will be subdued by the gentle sway of virtuous affection, 'till the dark shades of evil shall be erased from the moral picture,' and the divine and universal system appear."

This address evinces extensive research and thorough familiarity with the topics discussed. It was published by request, and received with more than usual popular favor. Besides the customary vote of thanks, the association presented the orator with a silver pitcher, bearing the following inscription :

"Presented as a tribute of respect from the Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers in Providence, R. I., to JOHN HOWLAND, Esq., their Secretary, commemorative of his Oration, delivered at their anniversary, April 13, 1818."

Once more, and for the last time, Mr. Howland yielded to the request of the association, and addressed them on the occasion of opening their new hall, in the Franklin building. This discourse was appropriately devoted to a review of the history and progress of the institution. He described "the depressing circumstances" under which Rhode

Island labored previously to adopting the constitution, and the part taken by the association in its correspondence with other mechanic bodies to establish a bond of union. The early position of the association, and the influence it exerted in favor of manufactures, is thus stated :

“ More than thirty years ago, long before any other individuals or public bodies awoke to a sense of the public interest ; when the manufactures of our country were in their infancy and in a state of orphanage ; when our supply of the most simple yet necessary articles depended on importations from Europe ; this association raised its voice and called on the mechanics and manufacturers from the district of Maine on the east, to Norfolk and Baltimore in the west and the south, to join with us in calling the attention of the nation to the promotion of American manufactures. The first movement in the city of New York towards this great object, was in consequence of a letter written by my venerable friend, our late president, William Richmond, Esq., addressed to the mechanics in that city, in the name of our association. In consequence of this letter, a meeting was called in that city, and the first step taken by them was an application to their Legislature for an act of incorporation, that they might feel and know their strength and influence in the great mass of the population. They obtained a charter, but from the jealousy and ignorance of the great land proprietors, it was clogged with absurd limitations and restrictions which obstructed their proceedings. The seed we had sown by our correspondence through the continent, our publications in the Gazettes, and by our public orations, seemed for a time to be lost ; but we were confident it would eventually spring up and yield an abundant harvest. For several years we travelled almost alone on this great highway of the nation. Those we met, if they did not directly oppose

our passage, treated us as visionaries, but suffered us to pass on.

"At length, the times and the circumstances have changed. American manufactures and the proper estimation of improvements and perfection in the mechanic arts are now the theme of every public journal. The halls of Congress have resounded with eloquent eulogiums; and it is deemed an important inquiry on the election of a member of that body, and even on the choice of the president of the United States—is he a friend to domestic manufactures?

"Thus, from the first small sparks which were struck by the Providence Association, a light and a flame have proceeded and increased, till the whole northern continent of America is illuminated, and rejoices in its splendor."

In 1830, having for six years presided over the association, Mr. Howland, at the age of seventy-three, retired from office. At the annual meeting, previous to proceeding to the election of officers, he rose and declining being considered a candidate for re-election, took his official leave in the following words:

GENTLEMEN OF THE ASSOCIATION:

"That union and harmony have subsisted among the members of this association, during more than forty years from its organization, is evinced by the fact that none of its presiding officers have been removed or left out, by any opposition vote of the members. In every instance, the president, when retiring from office, has, of his own choice, declined a new nomination. This circumstance is mentioned as honorable to the character of the institution, and proving that local or party feelings have not been suffered to operate here. Friendship and mutual confidence subsisting among our members for so many years, has established the character of the society for prudence and dis-

cretion among our fellow citizens at large, and given to the mechanics and manufacturers composing this body, an elevated standing in the community.

"No longer a candidate for re-election, I deem this a proper time to acknowledge, which I do with feelings of gratitude and high respect, the repeated proofs of your confidence and good will, which I have received for more than twenty-five years past, in the various offices of chairman of the select committee, of secretary of the association, of vice president, and for the last six years as president of the society. In these several stations, I have kept in view the great and laudable purposes for which we at first associated, and have endeavored, as far as my exertions and influence could extend, to promote harmony and friendship among us, and to discourage every approach towards party excitement. If, in any instance, my motives have been misunderstood, and any individual may have felt himself aggrieved or offended, he may be assured it was without design on my part, and that I should deeply regret such an impression being made on the mind of any one of our members.

You, gentlemen, will receive my hearty thanks for the general decorum and good order, and especially for the deference you have paid to the Chair during the time I have occupied it, and I have no doubt that my successor will receive from you the same marks of respect, which will greatly tend to facilitate the proper discharge of his duty to his own as well as to your satisfaction."

On his retiring from the hall, a vote was passed, thanking him "for his long and faithful services." This vote was communicated to him, accompanied with the following note:

PROVIDENCE, April 14, 1830.

Dear Sir:—By a resolve of the Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers, passed at their last an-

nual meeting, it was made my duty, (and I assure you, sir, it is no less a privilege,) to furnish you with the vote of that body hereto prefixed, expressive of their sense of the services rendered by you during many years of your past life. And permit me to express a hope that, in the decline of life, the interests of our association will still claim your earnest solicitude.

Respectfully yours,

SAMUEL W. WHEELER, Secretary.

JOHN HOWLAND, Esq.

To this communication Mr. Howland replied in the following terms :

PROVIDENCE, April 14, 1830.

Dear Sir :—I have received your communication, with the resolution passed at the annual meeting of the association, in approbation of my services as a member and officer of the society, and if anything could add to the high satisfaction derived from this testimony of the approbation of the association, with which I have been connected during the greatest part of my life, it would be felt and witnessed in the friendly and feeling terms of your note communicating the same.

Accept, sir, every pledge which a grateful heart can offer, that through the decline of life, even to its ultimate period, "the interests of the association will claim my earnest solicitude."

With great respect and regard, yours,

JOHN HOWLAND.

MR. SAMUEL W. WHEELER, Secretary.

This pledge was faithfully redeemed, and his unabated interest in the prosperity of the association is evinced by the fact, that up to 1850, when in his ninety-third year, he had been present at every annual meeting.

Mr. Howland's official position opened to him a pleasant acquaintance with the most prominent Boston mechanics. With colonel Paul Revere, their acknowledged leader, he formed an intimacy, rendered mutually agreeable by similarity of tastes and opinions; and whenever he spent a night in Providence he was invariably the guest of "friend Howland." These visits, though unfrequent, were anticipated by both with interest, and were remembered as among the choice enjoyments of the past. Once, during the life time of Revere, in company with a friend, Mr. Howland attended the triennial festival of the Boston Mechanics' Association. They were received with great respect and hospitality. "The company," says Mr. H., "met at the old Exchange Coffee House, where I was introduced to governor Gore, and other distinguished gentlemen. The governor wore a cocked hat on the occasion. Revere was of medium size, dark complexion, and had a French physiognomy. His influence with the mechanics was almost unbounded, especially at the north end." To the dinner succeeded sentiments and speeches. When his friend, as an official representative of the Providence mechanics, was called upon, he felt slightly embarrassed. The call was unexpected, and he had neither speech premeditated, nor sentiment prepared, to meet it. In this dilemma, Mr. H. came to his aid. With his accustomed forethought, he had, before leaving home, written two toasts, one of which he passed unobserved to his perplexed associate, who thus relieved, rose, and with a few prefatory remarks, presented it.

Boston and vicinity possessed many attractions for Mr. Howland. The remains of the breastworks on Bunker Hill, Lechmere Point and Dorchester Heights, calling up the forms of Warren, Putnam, Prescott and Washington, had not yet been disturbed by the levelling hand of improvement. Beacon Hill had not wholly disappeared, and the Hancock Mansion, with its ample grounds, stood apart with the dignity of early days, overlooking the noble "common," with its famous elm, beneath whose outspreading branches secret conclaves met, and Hutchinson and Oliver were denounced. The old Province House, with its cupola and Indian weather vane, retained something of the aristocratic air which distinguished its palmy days. The old State House still guarded the entrance to "King street," as when the blood of patriots flowed beneath its walls. Faneuil Hall, the "cradle of liberty," where he attended a political meeting, had lost none of the interest with which it was invested when its generous donor gracefully surrendered its keys to the town authorities. Major Melville, too, "the last of the cocked hats," was yet alive, hale, active, adhering to the costume of a former century, and full of anecdote of the "tea party," in which he participated. And then there was his hospitable host, the associate of Warren, Hancock and Adams, in resisting the tyranny of Gage, and a witness of the assault at Lexington. What enjoyment might he not expect in the society of one conversant, from the beginning, with every movement of the revolutionary party, and whose carriage-

ture of "A Warm Place" had given to the "Rescinders" a ludicrous notoriety.*

With a knowledge of their temperaments, imagination can easily picture the tenor of their fireside discourse. How rich in recollections of the choice spirits who met at the old Green Dragon tavern, would the record of their conversations be, had it been made. How clearly would it reveal causes in their details, unknown to history, which set the ball of freedom in motion. How many men unheard of in story, would it honor as noble champions of human rights. And from what numbers of "exclusive patriots" would it strip disguise, and show them up as heartless demagogues! Who would not esteem it a treat of the rarest sort, to hear thus from their own lips, how the "clarion notes" of James Otis aroused the popular mind to independence, and how Rhode Island's honored son won for himself a place in the confidence of the confederated colonies, second only to that held by the Father of his country? But the record is not here, and with the exception of the following incident, we must be content with pleasant speculations.

"Colonel Paul Revere," says Mr. Howland, "went on to the first Congress with dispatches from the provincial Congress of Massachusetts, and as a confidential messenger. He lodged in the house in which many members from different colonies boarded. One evening, a number of the gentlemen seated around the fire, were conversing on the engrossing subject of the day. They generally

*See Loring's Hundred Boston Orators, p. 44.

expressed the opinion that the next arrival from England would bring news of the repeal of the obnoxious acts then complained of. Governor Hopkins, who was walking the floor, and had not joined in the conversation, stopped, and facing the company said, 'Gentlemen, those of you who indulge this opinion, I think deceive yourselves. Powder and ball will decide this question. The gun and bayonet alone will finish the contest in which we are engaged, and any of you who cannot bring your minds to this mode of adjusting the question, had better retire in time, as it will not, perhaps, be in your power, after the first blood shall have been shed.' Colonel Revere stated that this speech had a most thrilling effect, and coming from one of the oldest members present, appeared to be deeply pondered. This was the first time he had seen or heard governor Hopkins speak, and he ever afterwards thought him one of our greatest men. Governor Hopkins was willing the worst should be known, and was ready to meet the event."

With his personal and political friend, Hon. Richard Jackson, jr., Mr. Howland frequently interchanged communications while that gentleman was a representative in Congress.* All that re-

* Hon. Richard Jackson, jr., from his boyhood, in Providence, in which town he was born, July 3, 1764, was remarkable for his great practical common sense. At the commencement of the revolutionary war, his father removed to Pomfret, Ct., where he remained until the peace of 1783. Soon after his return to his native place, he engaged in mercantile business, and was long associated in the enterprising firm of Butler, Wheaton & Jackson. In 1800, he was a principal founder of the Providence Washington Insurance Company, and from its commencement until his death, a period of thirty-eight years,

mains of their correspondence is the subjoined brief and familiar letters, written by the former, advertising to the embargo, the contemplated mediation of Russia, and the offer of the British government to negotiate peace. This loss has doubtless buried in oblivion many interesting details of political speculations and action, in which both participated, and of which, it may be supposed, they kept each other informed.

WASHINGTON, December 3d, 1808.

JOHN HOWLAND, ESQ :

Dear Sir :—Since my arrival here, I have forwarded you some documents, newspapers, &c., and shall continue to do the same during the session, for the information of yourself and customers. And all I demand in return is, that you once in a while, when you have leisure, write me a letter, and give some account of our town domestic affairs, and such other information as you may think will be useful and pleasing to me. Party runs high here, and what the final result of our legislation will be, no mortal can tell. In respect to the embargo system, the administration still cling to it. The Senate, yesterday, decided against a repeal, twenty-five to six, as you will see by the enclosed paper. But if the embargo is to continue on, there cannot be any business done this session, for every day there will be motions for its repeal, and petitions presenting continually, so that it will be one continual scene

he was the president. He was a member of the General Assembly, and was returned to the Congress of the United States as a representative, from 1808 to 1815. He planned the great bridge in front of his office, which was built under his inspection, as the chairman of the committee. For many years he was the moderator of the public meetings of the town. In his public stations, as in private life, he was honored for integrity and the faithful discharge of duty. He deceased April 18th, 1838, at the age of seventy-four years.

of confusion. Mr. Edward Dexter was here a few days past. He can give you some information about Congress, as he attended the debates two days. Give my respects to our old neighbors, Nichols, Waterman and Burrill.

I am, respectfully, your friend,

R. JACKSON, JR.

WASHINGTON, April 11th, 1810.

JOHN HOWLAND, Esq :

Dear Sir :—Your esteemed favor of the 31st ultimo came to hand a few days since. It was very acceptable.

. We have only two things pending before Congress, that are of much consequence to act upon the present session, in a national point of view. One is the renewal of the national bank charter, and the other is disbanding what is left of the new raised army. If these two objects were accomplished, the sooner Congress disperse, the better, as it is probable we shall carry off with us the remainder of all the commercial restrictions. We shall revert back exactly where we were, before the passing the non-importation embargo, and non-intercourse acts, so far as respects our laws ; and thus the country will be rid of a system which has been so injurious to our best interests, and degraded us both at home and abroad. Congress will adjourn on the 23d of the present month, and I expect to be at home about the first of May, when I hope to have the pleasure of seeing and talking over with you many things, new and old.

I am, sincerely, your friend,

R. JACKSON, JR

WASHINGTON, June 3d, 1813.

JOHN HOWLAND, Esq :

Dear Sir :—Since my arrival at the seat of government, I have forwarded you the National Intelligencer. Congress have done little more than organize the body, and

appoint the usual officers and committees. The committees have not as yet had time to mature and bring forward any business of importance. The mission to Russia seems to paralyze all the attempts for peace. Some think this mission will bring about that desirable object. But we are ignorant of what has been offered by Russia, or what shape this offered mediation comes in. It is clear that no understanding exists between our government and the British respecting it. Therefore it is difficult to form an opinion as to what the result of it will be. I do not discover anything which leads me to expect peace soon.

Your brother, colonel John Carlile, called on me yesterday. He had passed through the city two or three days before, in company with James Rhodes, Esq., to Alexandria. He spent two days in this place, and left here this morning on his return home. He told me he expected to make a short stay in Baltimore and Philadelphia. I should have been pleased if he could have made it convenient to have tarried here a few days longer. Mr. Rhodes is still here.

I am, respectfully, your friend,
R. JACKSON, JR.

WASHINGTON, January 6th, 1814.

JOHN HOWLAND, ESQ. ;

Dear Sir :—The present is merely to inform you that the President has this day sent a message to Congress, communicating a letter from Lord Castlereagh to our Secretary of State, received by the British despatch vessel lately arrived at Annapolis. Also Mr. Munroe's answer to said letter. The substance of these letters is, that the British government declines the mediation of Russia, but offers to negotiate for peace either at London or Gottenburg. Our government accepts the offer to meet at the latter place.

In haste, I am, respectfully, your friend,
R. JACKSON, JR.,

The destruction by fire, in 1837, of a large collection of manuscripts, including letters from many of Mr. Howland's correspondents, has deprived this work of considerable appropriate material, particularly such as would have served to elucidate the political history of the times. The correspondence between him and the Hon. James Burrill, jr., while a member of Congress, was of this character, and as in instances before referred to, its loss is a matter of regret. A single letter only, has been spared, which is here inserted, referring to a subject then before the Senate, concerning which, as elsewhere stated, Mr. H. was frequently solicited for information.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 31, 1817.

JOHN HOWLAND, ESQ.

Dear Sir:—I received, yesterday, your very acceptable letter of the 25th inst. I now enclose to you the Bill to provide for the officers, &c., as it has passed the House of Representatives. It will not pass in the Senate for several days, and will be opposed, and probably, in some particulars, altered, if not amended. To-day, Mr. King presented a petition from the New York and New Jersey surviving officers, praying Congress to allow them their half pay, computing from ten years after the close of the war. I have strong doubts whether this will be agreed to. General North, and others, are here as a committee from the officers, to support it. Now is the time, if ever, to obtain payment for revolutionary services and claims, and I suppose the famous Crary and Topham regiments will come forward with renewed hopes. The general aspect of political affairs here is mild and pacific; but the calm may be but the forerunner of a tempest. The Spanish patriots, the Massachusetts claims, and some other touchy subjects,

remain to be discussed, and I should not be surprised if they should bring forth a great deal of clamor and zeal. The Senate has adjourned over New Years' day, and tomorrow there will be a great show at the palace. You see that we are determined not to work very hard; but though there is little work there is but little play. A duller place, or one more destitute of interesting objects than this city, can hardly be found.

I shall always be pleased to receive your letters, and will punctually answer them.*

I am, with great truth, your friend and servant,
JAMES BURRILL, JR.

* The Hon. James Burrill, jr., was born in Providence, April 25th, 1772, and early developed unusual intellectual qualities. His studies preparatory to entering Brown University, which he did at the age of twelve years, were conducted by the late William Wilkinson, then the most eminent teacher in Providence. He graduated in 1788, and choosing the profession of the law, commenced its study at the age of sixteen, in the office of Hon. Theodore Foster. On the elevation of Mr. F. to the United States Senate, Mr. Burrill concluded his studies with Hon. David Howell. At the age of nineteen he was admitted to the bar, to practice in all the courts in the State, and so eminent did he soon become, that in 1797, at the age of twenty-five, he was elected Attorney General of the State. From this office he voluntarily retired in May, 1813. In the following October, he was returned a member of the General Assembly, and soon after elected Speaker of the House of Representatives. In this office he honorably served until he received the appointment of Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court. In February, 1817, he was elected Senator in Congress, where he faithfully discharged the duties of his responsible station until his sudden decease at Washington, December 25th, 1820. On taking his seat in Congress, his talents and accomplishments were immediately recognized, and his amiable qualities won the respect and esteem alike of those who agreed, and of those who differed with him in political opinion. Born at a period "when men begun to speak of American independence," he was imbued with the spirit of freedom, and the oppressed found in him an advocate and friend. With the abused Indian tribes he strongly sympathized, and in the exciting debates on the admission of Missouri into the Union, his voice and his vote were against the extension of slavery. It was in this memorable struggle that an incident occurred which gave remarkable impressiveness to his last public effort. As he rose to speak,

CHAPTER X.

Unlike many who entered the army of Independence, Mr. Howland acquired no taste for the profession of arms. The war of the revolution he regarded as a struggle sacred to human rights. Resistance to the mother country was a terrible necessity. But having made that resistance, and discharged the service due to the united colonies, he retired from the din of the camp with an experience that imparted new relish to peaceful pursuits. And though at a subsequent period, he joined the ranks of the "United Train of Artillery," and for a short time held the commission of lieutenant, he served rather as a member of military police, than with an ambition to win the crimsoned "fame and glory" of the battle field.

the skirt of his coat caught in the chair, and for a moment hindered his assuming an erect position. "That," exclaimed governor Barbour, "is a bad omen." With an expression of countenance inspired by his theme, Mr. Burrill instantly responded, "I fear no omen in my country's cause!" a sentiment deserving, as was said soon after, "to be inscribed as his epitaph, and to become the watch-word of the republic." Mr. Burrill had a persuasive eloquence, and his varied attainments rendered his conversation peculiarly instructive. In all his official relations he enjoyed the universal confidence of his fellow citizens. In the annals of Rhode Island he will be honored as one of her most distinguished statesmen, and as one of the brightest ornaments of her literary and social institutions.

Naturally of a pacific temperament, his mind was often disturbed by the apparent antagonism of war and christianity, and like many others he was sorely perplexed to reconcile the aggressive character of the former, with the fraternal principles inculcated by the latter. Principles so congenial, early met in his breast a cordial reception, and the thoughts of maturer years ripened into a clear conviction that except in self-defence, a resort to arms was without excuse. "He believed in the possibility of promoting peace, as he believed in the possibility of obeying the gospel. He did not wish nor dare to doubt, that Christ knew what was in man, and meant what he said when he inculcated forgiveness of enemies, forbade retaliation and revenge, and taught, by his life and death, that evil was to be overcome with good. On these precepts and promises, Mr. Howland rested."* He believed that all difficulties between nations could be settled by arbitration, and when, in 1818, the Rhode Island Peace Society was formed, he recognized the event as auspicious to the spread of this humanizing sentiment.

Of this society Mr. Howland was an original member, and with his fellow associates improved every opportunity "in illuminating the minds of men upon the awful subject of war." In 1821, he was chosen a trustee of the society, and in the same year was associated with Dr. Messer and Thomas Arnold in revising its constitution. June 27th, 1837, he was elected president of the society, which office he held till the close of life.

* Dr. Hall's Discourse.

In June, 1843, the first "General Peace Convention" was held in London, by invitation of the London Peace Society, "to deliberate upon the best means, under the Divine blessing, to show the world the evil and inexpediency of the spirit and practice of war, and to promote permanent and universal peace." The Rhode Island Peace Society having received the circular of invitation, authorized the president to reply, which he did as follows :

TO THE LONDON PEACE CONVENTION.

The Rhode Island Peace Society having received a copy of the circular issued by the London Peace Society, calling a Convention of the friends of Peace to meet in June next, listen with great pleasure to this call ; but, unable to send a delegate to aid in its proceedings, we take this method of stating to the Convention our high opinion of the zeal and good motives which influence the London society to propose so wise and important a measure. Great and permanent good, we hope, may result from it, as a means of convincing the nations that war is inconsistent with the spirit of christianity, and the true interests of mankind.

We endeavor, as it has been our purpose, to aid in the exhibition of this glorious truth. The societies for the promotion of peace, both in the United States and in the British empire, have great cause to thank God for the favor he has bestowed on their exertions. The efforts of those societies have changed, in a great degree, the face of civil society, and the views and actions of public men. From the progress of civilization, in which the principles of peace are predominant, the nations now find security, not in armies and navies, but in the sense of general justice, and the feelings of right which prevail in a civilized state. A general feeling of security has come to prevail among the weaker as well as the more powerful nations.

The recent amicable settlement of our Eastern boundary question, which is treated with satisfaction and pleasure on both sides the Atlantic, was the result of this uniform progress of the principles of peace.

A declaration of war will never be made by a ruler who knows that the people will not support him in carrying it on. To the exclamation of the prophet, "like people, like priest," we may add like people, like kings and presidents. Enlighten the people on the character of war and the custom will cease forever. This has been the purpose of the Rhode Island Peace Society, and this purpose is here, perhaps, more visible, where the choice and election of public men proceed more immediately from the people, and is more frequent than it can be in Europe.

There is a strong propensity in rulers to increase their power, and it generally results in the increase of the military force; and to this the public sentiment ought to oppose a check. In this country, a large army is not a popular support of government, and the people will not submit to the expense, and the friends of peace will endeavor to prevent a burdensome increase of a navy beyond what will be sufficient to suppress piracy and the African slave trade, as Europe has witnessed that wars have been commenced by the first aggressions of naval commanders.

We have satisfactory assurance that the principles of peace in our land have extended far beyond the limits of our association;—that vast numbers who have never had their names recorded as members of any organized peace society, have adopted our sentiments; and we have reason to hope that national wars may cease before the light which shall shine into and purify the minds of the people of different nations. We have the pleasure of announcing that the great body of the clergy of all denominations in the Eastern States, are supporters of peace, on the principles contained in the gospel of Christ. If our being so remote from the nations of Europe, and little connection

with this continent, is any apology for our not taking part in the circulation of tracts among them, this glory appears the more conspicuous and belongs more exclusively to the London Peace Society, to whom our grateful acknowledgments are justly due.

May the blessing of God attend on and rest among the Convention about to be assembled in London, that they may greatly extend the blessings of the gospel, which is a revelation of peace and good will to men.

Signed, In behalf of the Rhode Island Peace Society,
JOHN HOWLAND, President.

May 22d, 1843.

In a paper read before the Rhode Island Historical Society, July 19th, 1844, Mr. Howland, in allusion to this convention, thus speaks: "The labor of historians from the time that Cæsar invaded Gaul and crossed the channel to Britain, down to the battle of Waterloo, has been to record the destructive scenes of war—of battles and sieges, of victories and defeats, among contending nations. His occupation is now about to change. Men have now grown wiser. A good Bishop of London, fifty years ago, said, "war is a game which, were the people wise, kings could not play at." Had he lived another half century, he doubtless would have rejoiced to have witnessed in his own diocese during the last summer, delegates from six different independent nations, assembled and consulting on the means to prevent national wars, with the benevolent and pious prospect of accomplishing this great purpose. A new class of historians must then appear, who have not found it necessary to study the art of fortification and the manœuvring of hos-

tile armies, but to record the improvements in the useful arts, and the progress of civilization, instead of bloody records of the battle field and the destruction of towns and villages." Glorious will be the epoch in which the "new class of historians" shall have begun their work!

The war of 1812 and its causes, divided public sentiment here as elsewhere. The news of the declaration of hostilities when announced in Providence, "was received not only as a great national calamity, as war always is, but as peculiarly calculated to excite sorrow and regret. The bells were tolled, and the flags floated at half mast.* On the part of the enemy, the war soon assumed a sanguinary and ferocious aspect. The barbarous conduct of the British naval force sent out to ravage the Atlantic coast, had the effect to excite universal indignation, and to unite all parties in the common defence. From principle, and from an instinctive shrinking from bloodshed, Mr. Howland was opposed to the war. He was identified with the party avowing their hostility to the measure. Yet when danger threatened the town of Providence, he immediately united with his fellow-citizens of all parties, in concerting measures for public protection. As chairman of a district committee, and associated with William Larned and Ebenezer K. Dexter, his labors, with theirs, were important and successful in organizing, within prescribed limits, a voluntary force to assist in erecting fortifications at Field's Point, "Squaw Hollow," and other places. In that work, he wrought with his compatriots of the second

* Staples' Annals.

district. But one spirit pervaded the community. The military were frequent in their drills. Citizens of every profession, including the clergy, the college faculty and students, with pickaxes and shovels, were daily at the lines, rendering efficient service. And had the enemy ventured up the bay they would have been opposed at the several points of defence, with a force determined to resist to the last. Happily, they chose a more prudent course, and Providence was spared an effusion of blood.

The convulsed state of Europe subsequent to the abdication of Louis Philippe and the proclamation of the French Republic under the presidency of Lamartine, disturbed the faith of many, but it had no effect to shake Mr. Howland's confidence in the ultimate prevalence of peace principles. He confided in a power mightier than the surges of human passion, and to that power he steadfastly looked for an influence to calm the storms raging in the bosoms of nations. "The time for revolutions," he writes, "has not yet ceased, and history will have records of their progress and results. For the signs of the times strongly refer to transactions and scenes as terrific and important as any contained in the history of the ages which have passed, and of which Europe will witness the first movements. But the result will vindicate the character of an overruling Providence in the detestation of war, and the establishment of universal harmony among the human race." His repugnance to war increased with advancing years. The nearer he approached the world where human deeds are seen in their true light, the more cruel

and debasing appeared this method of settling disputes. To the young, he often pointed out its wrong and sin; and when he had entertained them with some of his revolutionary stories, he usually closed by saying, "war is a bad business, and I advice you to have nothing to do with it." In common with a large body of his countrymen, he felt grieved and mortified when, in 1847, war with Mexico was declared. It seemed to him aggressive and unjust. He spoke of it always as an infraction of the spirit of christianity, and unworthy an enlightened and high minded nation. To the State appropriation in aid of volunteers, he objected on constitutional grounds. In an unpublished communication, found among his papers, and probably the last written for the press, this opinion is distinctly expressed—an opinion sustained by the action of the town and the State executive more than thirty years before. "The constitution," [of the United States] he says, "places the whole power of raising armies in Congress, and not in the States or towns. This question was decided in this State in the last war with Great Britain. Congress had ordered a draft of fifty thousand of the militia to march to the invasion of Canada. Our proportion were drafted in this town of persons from eighteen to forty-five years. They were men of various conditions and circumstances in life, some with large families who required their daily labor for support. The venerable Stephen Wardwell moved, in a town meeting called for that purpose, that twelve dollars per month be paid by the town, in addition to the continental pay of

forty shillings per month, to enable the drafted men to hire substitutes. This raised the question whether the town could do this, as Congress, only, had power to raise soldiers, and whether a tax for this purpose could be collected legally. The States had power to raise troops to repel invasion and to suppress insurrection, and nothing more. This was decided by the opinion of James Burrill, jr., against the resolution offered, and the meeting ended.

"Governor Jones immediately convened the council of war, and they despatched Mr. Searle, the adjutant general, to the president of the United States, to represent to him that this State was more exposed to the enemy and their cruisers, than any of the other States of the Union; that we wanted more armed men to defend it; and if the president would order it, the State would raise and enlist a regiment of troops to serve during the war for its defence. This proposal was favorably received by president Madison, and it was done accordingly, and the drafted men were discharged.

"It will doubtless be asked, what has this old piece of history to do with the case? It is answered, that it serves to show the correctness of the opinion of Mr. Burrill, that the State has no power to raise soldiers without the consent of the United States, so expressed."

In 1819, Mr. Howland devoted such time as could be spared from other avocations, in writing out the results of his investigations of the state of religion, both in Providence and the colony of

Rhode Island, from the arrival of Roger Williams to the establishment of the First Congregational Society and Church in 1720, embracing particulars of Samuel Gorton and George Fox. These notices were recorded in a book, to which, from time to time, were added accounts of occurrences that he deemed worthy of preservation. The value of such a record of the past, can be estimated from his well known habits of patient and thorough research; but unfortunately they were many years ago mislaid, and have not as yet been recovered. To some future historian, should they come to light, they may prove an important help in elucidating the characters of men who exerted no inconsiderable influence upon the theological opinions of their day, as well as aid in filling the chasms of local events.

The Providence Institution for Savings came into existence this year, (1819.) The want of such an institution had for some time been discussed in private circles, and the success that had followed a then recent movement in Boston, encouraged a similar effort here. At a meeting of the select committee of the Mechanics' Association, Sept. 27th, the subject was introduced, and after a free expression of opinion, the secretary, Mr. Howland, was "requested to take such measures as may be deemed advisable" to engage the public interest in an object designed to promote economy and frugality among the laboring classes, "thereby enabling them to save a part of their earnings till age or infirmities should render the use of them indispensable." In pursuance of this request, and

with the approbation of influential gentlemen not members of the association, a public meeting was notified and held at the Washington Insurance office, which resulted in steps necessary to establish a Savings' Institution. Prominent among those consulted by Mr. Howland, and who evinced an active interest from the beginning, were Hon. Thomas P. Ives and Hon. James Burrill, jr. To the personal services and judicious suggestions of the former, the institution over which he presided until his decease, was mainly indebted for the careful arrangement of its business plans, and to the close of life enjoyed the benefit of his large financial experience.

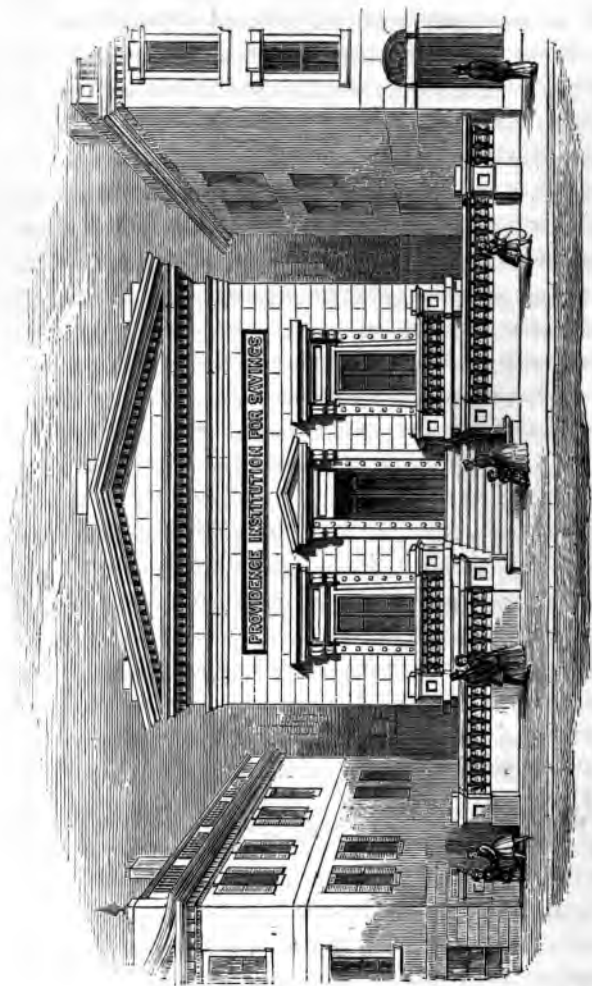
At the meeting for organization, November 4th, Mr. Howland was chosen treasurer, and on the 20th of the same month, began to receive deposits. On the first day, twenty-seven accounts were opened, amounting to \$818. Of the depositors seven were minors, two widows, and one colored.* At the end of the month, the accounts had increased to eighty-nine, and at the close of the year, two hundred and sixty-four. From the day of opening to September 30, 1821, nearly twenty-two months, three hundred and fifty-two accounts were entered, and \$33,808,68 deposited. During that time, only \$2295 had been withdrawn, leaving for accumulation a capital of \$31,513,65. Whatever of doubt in regard to the feasibility of this new financial idea might at first have been entertained, confidence was now firmly established. The business of the office annually increased, and

* Cæsar Hitchcock.

on the 28th September, 1839, the deposits amounted to \$375,751.

The activity evinced by Mr. Howland in the preliminary measures, was carried into the duties of his new office. Convinced, by long observation, that the great error of laboring men was improvidence, he employed his powers of persuasion to effect reform. He reasoned with those who shook their heads doubtingly, that there was no fatality in man's condition. If he was born poor, it did not follow, of necessity, that he must remain so. In the humblest station he had inherent ability to rise. Economy would stimulate industry, industry would develop self-reliance, and these qualities combined would ensure competency. His efforts were successful in inducing many who had been in the habit of spending all their earnings, and who had never before thought of trying to save, to lay by a portion for future need. Children he uniformly impressed with the importance of "taking care of the pence." "I am indebted to Mr. Howland," said a man, shortly after his decease, "for what property I possess. Of the pocket money given me I had saved five dollars, and soon after the Savings' Institution was opened, I went to him and made a deposit. He appeared pleased, and patting me on the head, called me a good boy. 'Save all the money you get,' said he kindly, 'and bring it here, and by the time you are of age you may have enough to set up business with.' I followed his advice, and little sums, such as most boys spent for trifles, I saved and carried to him; and on my freedom day I was the possessor of a





sum sufficient to enable me, without further assistance, to set up my trade. The habit of resisting temptation to useless expenditures thus formed, has been invaluable to me through life, and has crowned my labors with reasonable success."

In October, 1840, Mr. Howland retired from the office to which he had been for twenty-one successive years elected, and the board of directors, in recognition of the value of his services, adopted unanimously the following resolutions:

"Resolved, As the sense of this meeting, that John Howland, Esq., merits the thanks of this corporation, for his zeal and activity, in coöperating with others, in founding this Institution, and for his faithful services as treasurer during its existence, many years of which, in its infancy, these services having been rendered without compensation. And also for his counsel and influence with the depositors, by which many sums have been retained, which might otherwise have been withdrawn and lost.

"Resolved, That in his retirement from this public station at the advanced age of eighty-three, we trust he will continue to enjoy the comforts of social and domestic life, the esteem of his fellow citizens, and the satisfaction of witnessing the prosperity and usefulness of those institutions which he has so largely contributed to establish in this community."

Mr. Howland was succeeded by Henry Cushing, Esq., with whom Samuel C. Blodgett, Esq., was associated in 1846, as assistant treasurer and book-keeper. Of the original board of officers, only three survive; but he whose name will ever be identified with the origin of the institution, lived to see its privileges improved by eight thousand

and seven hundred individuals, and its capital swelled from \$818 to \$1,558,000. The prudence with which its affairs have been conducted, and the prosperity its history unfolds, have obtained for it in the community a deserved confidence.

On retiring from the office of treasurer of the Savings' Institution, Mr. Howland withdrew from active participation in public affairs, and passed much of his time at home in reading, or in social intercourse. His daily recreation was to visit the mutual insurance office, of which he had been a director, or to look in upon friends at their places of business. He continued also to attend the meetings of the various associations of which he was a member, until decreasing strength rendered the efforts too fatiguing. Of the political movements of the day, he was not an indifferent spectator. He kept himself well informed of passing events. Unbiased by sectional feeling, he expressed his opinions of National and State policy with the utmost freedom, and those opinions were uniformly sustained by his vote. The elective franchise he considered the conservative power of freemen—a proper medium for expressing the popular will—an effective agent for correcting abuses under a republican form of government. In his judgment, the man who held this right, and neglected or refused to exercise it, was untrue to himself and his country. With men who never voted, yet censured the administration of government, he had no sympathy. Bad rulers could be placed in power only through the corruption or the indifference of electors, or of both combined; and it was

the business of all opposed to misrule, to resist it at the ballot box. They who neglected so to do, had no consistent ground for complaint. Actuated by these views, he never failed while health permitted, to fulfil what he maintained to be the first duty of a good citizen. He had voted at every presidential election from Washington to president Pierce. His last vote was given at the age of ninety-four years, for general Scott.

The year 1820 brought to Mr. Howland requirements for services unexpected and somewhat onerous. This year the Rhode Island Society for the encouragement of Domestic Industry was formed, an institution whose beneficent influence upon agricultural and manufacturing interests has secured for it an honorable rank among kindred associations. Though friendly to that object, Mr. Howland was not present at the preliminary meeting, and was much surprised the next day to learn that he had been appointed on a committee to draft a constitution, rules and by-laws for the society. This labor, the other members of the committee turned over to him; and though reluctantly assumed, it is deserving of mention, as showing his promptness and quickness of conception, that in the course of a few hours on the same day, the work was satisfactorily accomplished. Soon another demand was made upon him. As the time for the first annual exhibition approached, he was invited to deliver an address. This honor he declined, and referred the committee to Hon. James Burrill, jr., "who knew more respecting domestic

manufactures, agriculture and commerce, than any other man," as a suitable person to perform the service. Mr. Burrill was applied to, who also declined. "Howland is the man to do this," said he to the committee. "Go to him," he added playfully, "and tell him I say so, and he must not refuse." The message was communicated. "Tell Mr. Burrill," was the reply, "that I appreciate his good opinion; but I have no time to prepare an address, and must decline; and besides, I know nothing of agriculture, which ought to be the chief subject of discourse before a farmers' meeting." The committee withdrew, and considering the matter finally disposed of, he dismissed it from his mind. But he was not permitted so to escape. What could not be accomplished by persuasion, was effected by stratagem; and a few days subsequent, he was not a little astonished, on opening his morning paper, in seeing himself officially announced as the orator for the forthcoming anniversary. Finding himself "cornered," as he expressed it, in this friendly contest, and unwilling, at that late hour, to disappoint the wishes of his friends, he consented.

The exhibition took place at Pawtuxet, on the 18th October, and was numerously attended. The address, though written under the pressure of other duties, and the inconvenience of limited time, was pertinent to the occasion. The Providence American of the 20th October, described it as "learned without pretension, ingenious without subtlety, and philosophical without abstruseness." The orator "briefly traced the progress of the use-

ful arts from their rude condition at the first settlement of our forefathers in America, to their present state of improvement and promise. The reciprocal relations of agriculture, manufactures and the mechanic arts, were illustrated with much perspicuity, and in his explanation of the design of the society, he furnished the most unqualified evidence of its claims on the patronage of the community." A copy for publication was requested, but for reasons honorable to the author's modesty, was not furnished.

In this address, of which he thought so humbly, he reproduces his favorite idea of the mutual relations of agriculture, manufactures and the mechanic arts. He speaks of the obstacles to improvement in these several departments, prevalent from the settlement of the country, and of the value of associations in promoting their prosperity. "The time has now arrived," he says, "when the prejudices which have so long held us tributary to foreign nations, like the cords which bound the strong man in the valley of Sorek are to be broken; for America is now arising in freedom and strength, and will shake the brittle bands from her sinewy limbs.

"The numerous societies or associations which have been recently established, or which are now forming for the promotion of domestic manufactures, and for improvement in agriculture, are proofs that the public mind is enlightened, and that the attention of the people has been drawn to those measures which are so intimately connected with the best interests of the country. These associations, so honorable to the individuals who compose them,

are sure indications that the majority of the people in the Eastern States are disposed to aid their judicious and laudable exertions." Quoting the words of Hamilton in favor of institutions for the development of our internal resources, and the value of premiums as a stimulant to enterprise, he proceeds: "If these views of the great statesman which were presented to Congress twenty-nine years ago, had been then adopted and acted upon, the cultivation of our non-slaveholding States would at this day have equalled some of the finest departments of France, and the tide of emigration from the old to the new States would never have set with so strong a current. But should no further patronage ever be afforded by the national government, the ingenuity and skill so conspicuous in the American character, will soon place the productions of our artists on such high and permanent ground that they will meet with little competition in the market. Those articles which are in most common use, and which are most important and necessary to every householder, have already the preference with every purchaser who consults his interest rather than his prejudices.

"American fabrics will soon form an item in the export trade that will more than compensate the ship owner for the loss of freight on foreign manufactures, and the three great classes into which the labor and enterprise of the country are divided, commerce, agriculture and manufactures,—will be forced to confess that the interest and prosperity of one branch is essential to the prosperity of the whole.

“Whether we consider the subject either in a moral or a political view, every circumstance which tends in the feelings of the people of this country to obliterate the idea of geographical lines and State boundaries marking us as a distinct people, except so far as to excite a useful emulation, will promote our social happiness and domestic enjoyments.” “The knowledge which has been diffused by different writers, and the emulation which has been excited by offering premiums, have produced an effect which our fathers could not have believed possible, and have justly raised expectations which the farmers of Rhode Island must not suffer to be disappointed.

“The Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers was incorporated before this State had consented to become a member of the union, and since that event they have presented two memorials to Congress, praying for additional duties to be levied on certain specific articles of foreign manufacture, and one other in which they demanded a repeal of taxes assessed on several of their occupations and professions. With the exception of the measures pursued by that association, the interests of agriculture and manufactures have been left in this State wholly to individual enterprise until last winter, when gentlemen from different parts of the State assembled during the session of the General Assembly, and formed this institution. And it now rests with the people of every profession, to render it one of the most useful and interesting associations not only to the agriculturist and

manufacturer, but to every family where its influence extends. . . . It is an institution which, properly supported, will not only elevate and sustain the character and reputation of this State, but eventually add millions to the property of its citizens. It will produce a friendly and social intercourse, in which by a mutual exchange of ideas and opinions, friendship and good neighborhood will be established, and information on the most important and useful concerns diffused.

“In the department of agriculture, as the appearance of this day is calculated to excite and extend, will gather round us every pledge of peace and security when the storms of revolution shall agitate the nations. We may be a world within ourselves; and when the labor of Europe shall be interrupted by civil dissensions or military preparation, they may solicit our friendship and ask us for bread.

“The objection which had its birth in the first settlement of this country, that our population was too thin and scattered to admit of manufactures, no longer exists. The laws of nature cannot be effectually opposed. Our dense population now speaking with the tongues of millions, demand that they be established. The interests of the whole community of States require that they should be supported; and that which is for the interest of a vast community, will be adopted and maintained.

“Agriculture and manufactures are united by indissoluble bonds. No country was ever well cultivated in which the mechanic arts and manufactures were not advanced to a high degree of per-

fection. This plain and simple fact is supported by all the testimony of ancient and modern history. Place the map of Europe or Asia before you, and point to what nation you please, and the history of that nation will tell you, that the cultivation of the soil and the improvement of its manufactures, have kept on in an even and equal pace.

“In contemplating this wonderful system, the whole machinery of which is of divine construction, we are led to adore that wisdom and benevolence which has thus connected all the links of our social existence. No man liveth to himself. So no art, science or profession, can subsist of itself. A mutual connection exists, met by contract or agreement of the parties; for no man cultivates a farm, or establishes a manufactory for the benefit of another by design. Yet a law which he had no voice in enacting, has ordained that the whole community and every profession or occupation in it, shall be interested in his labors. The individual who makes an improvement in machinery, or in any branch of useful manufacture, receives first the benefit of his labor, and in pursuit of his reward his exertions terminate in the advantage of the whole species.”

The address closes with the following characteristic language: “On the fourth of July, 1776, we became politically independent. But we shall not be independent in the true and moral sense of that term, till every man is clothed in garments of American manufacture, and our exports (of domestic origin) shall equal our imports from foreign countries. One of the objects of this society, in

union with every society that has similar views, is to aid in the accomplishment and full establishment of this true independence; and though most of the fathers have fallen asleep who signed the first declaration, yet may God grant that the present generation may not follow them to the tomb until the second shall be ratified and established."

Mr. Howland strongly sympathized, in its beginning, with the Temperance movements in New England, and to the appeals of Hewitt, Frost, and other pioneers of reform, he gave a cordial response.—His varied intercourse with men had made him the saddened witness of the ruin of fortunes, the destruction of domestic happiness, and the blight of character, caused by the excessive use of intoxicating liquors, aroused an anxious desire, often expressed in private, that some combined effort might be made to eradicate the evil. Many others shared in the desire, but no one seemed prepared to stand forth as the advocate of a specific plan. At this juncture, in the spring of 1827, he invited a number of influential gentlemen to meet at his office to confer upon the subject. This consultation gave currency to a call subsequently made for a public meeting, which was held in the vestry of the Baptist meeting house, April 16th, to deliberate on some system of action adapted to the exigencies of the times. Mr. Howland was called to preside, and Walter R. Danforth was chosen Secretary.—The temperance cause had not then the prestige of popular favor, and to advocate its principles was to risk no trifling amount of obloquy. In the se-

lection of Mr. Howland to discharge the duties of the chair, there was peculiar propriety. In his personal practice, he had fulfilled the higher law of later days. The habit of providing rum for workmen, he had uniformly discountenanced. The social custom connected with the side-board, he had deprecated as a mistaken hospitality. And more than sixty years before he had persuaded the carpenter, employed to build his house on Benefit street, to accept an equivalent in money for the customary supply of liquor; thereby demonstrating in the face of universal usage to the contrary, that it was possible to erect a dwelling without "grog."

Several meetings followed, at one of which a committee reported a series of resolutions specifically "defining the duties and obligations to be considered binding" upon those who should affix their names thereto, "leaving the same open at all times for the voluntary signature of any individual who may be willing to lend his influence in that way." After free and full discussion these resolutions were unanimously adopted, and signed by eighty-six gentlemen present. The simple adoption of a pledge to "abstain from the habitual and unnecessary use of ardent spirits," and to use the best endeavors to discountenance the practice in others, it was believed would at that time more effectually promote the cause of temperance than the formation of a "distinct association with the appointment of officers and the formality of the admission of members;" consequently no such organization was attempted. The meetings thus commenced, continued to be held at stated periods, Mr.

Howland still presiding, until in the progress of popular sentiment, they gave place to other modes of action. Almost simultaneously with this movement the question was taken up and discussed in the Mechanics' Association. At a meeting, held April 20th, Mr. Howland, then president, together with Abner Kingman and Josiah Lawton, were appointed a committee to devise some course of action. At a subsequent meeting they reported that there was reason for the alarm then felt in the community in regard to the increase of intemperance, and that it was incumbent on the members of the association "to cast the weight of their influence" in favor of such "prudent and practicable measures" as were adapted "to stay the progress of a calamity greater than has ever before visited our country." They also reported two resolutions which were unanimously adopted; one, approving the resolutions passed by the citizens, and the other, recommending "to the several trades and professions composing the association, to call separate meetings to consider and adopt such measures respecting the practice of furnishing ardent spirits to workmen and apprentices in their employ, in the course of their business, or in manufacturing establishments, as they may judge most effectual to restrain or abolish their use."* For more than a

* By invitation of the committee, George Baker, Esq., delivered a public address on temperance, May 29th, which was favorably received, and a copy requested for the press. It was the earliest service of the kind known to have been performed in Providence. It portrayed, says a writer of the day, "in a feeling manner the evils of intemperance on individuals and in the community. It was a substantial, practical address, directed to the understandings of the audience,"

quarter of a century this active and influential body have been steadfast in their support of temperance principles.

A history of the temperance reform in Providence, does not enter our present design. The brief sketch here recorded, with many other facts omitted, gleaned from scattered records and verbal sources, is only an epitome of the first movements with which Mr. Howland stood connected. He seldom spoke of his early efforts, and never, in a way that implied claim to merit. He was not, in the ordinary sense, a leader, and was not ambitious to be so considered. In this, as in other enterprises for moral and social improvement, he acted with singleness of heart for the public good. His sense of responsibility to society was keen and deep, as was ever shown by his prompt obedience to the demands of duty. He never could be hindered by satire or open opposition. He was the last man in the world to ask, "what will be said?" His only anxiety was to know what was right. If there was a laboring oar, he was ready to take it. When he saw a work to be done, he did it. Others were early in the field, and nobly "bore the heat and burden of the day." Many were honorably conspicuous in the work, and none more than he rejoiced in their success, or were more hearty in awarding the meed of praise; yet it is to his private suggestions and personal exertions that the cause of temperance is largely indebted for this first organization of an active public opinion.

CHAPTER XI.

On the 18th September, 1828, Mr. Howland, by invitation, was present at the Bi-Centennial anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims at Salem.—The occasion was honored by the attendance of an unusual number of eminent men from neighboring and distant places, and attracted an immense multitude to hear the oration. The services were held in the North Church. The oration by Hon. Joseph Story, was “a profound and eloquent discussion of the topics appropriate to the day.” The exercises at the church were followed by a sumptuous dinner, at which the venerable Dr. Edward Augustus Holyoke presided, assisted by judge Story, Hon. William Reed, Willard Peele, Pickering Dodge, and Gideon Barstow, Esqs. Among the distinguished guests were Hon. Daniel Webster, Hon. Edward Everett, governor Levi Lincoln, lieutenant governor Thomas L. Winthrop, Hon. Alden Bradford, president of the Pilgrim Society, judge Davis, Hon. Timothy Pickering, Hon. Nathaniel Silsbee, and Hon. Leverett Saltonstall. On account of the advanced age and infirmities of Dr. Holyoke, judge Story discharged the active duties of the Chair, and with accustomed tact and grace “called up” gentlemen

who addressed the company. To a sentiment complimentary to the senators of Massachusetts in Congress, Mr. Webster responded at length in a speech of great power and beauty. He "was peculiarly happy in giving an uncontrolled flow of his own patriotic feelings, associated familiarly as they were with the early history, civil and religious, of New England." Two hours thus passed, when judge Story, turning towards Mr. Howland, said, "I am happy to observe that we are honored with the presence of a gentleman from Rhode Island.—Doubtless we shall hear something from him relating to Roger Williams." The call, connected with the subject assigned him, was not free from embarrassment. The name of Roger Williams united with it occurrences, in regard to which, a native of Rhode Island might naturally be supposed to entertain ideas differing from the popular sentiment of Massachusetts. To omit all reference to the prominent features of his character would seem indifferent to his memory, and to speak of him on the very spot where he had given offence, by his plain dealing with cherished opinions and customs, and before the descendants of a people from whose displeasure he fled, without falling into similar condemnation, was not an easy task. But Mr. Howland's ready invention came to his aid. In well-chosen words he offered a sentiment true in its allegiance to the founder of Rhode Island, harmonizing with the spirit of the occasion, and playfully suggestive. On rising to respond, he said, "I am sensible, sir, that it is not the usual order on public occasions to offer a toast which has been antici-

pated or presented by another gentleman before him, but as the gentleman alluded to is a citizen of Salem, and I am from a different town and another State, I presume it will not be improper to offer this :

“The ancient town of Salem, where Roger Williams first advocated the freedom of conscience in religious concerns.”

Judge Story quickly perceived the point of the sentiment, and by his half-amused, intelligent expression, evinced his appreciation of a sentence that had revealed to the company a great deal relating to Roger Williams.

In a previous chapter, Mr. Howland makes honorable mention of major Simeon Thayer, of Rhode Island, who was commissioned a lieutenant in the “army of observation” in 1775, and continued in active service to the close of the war. His gallant defence of Fort Mifflin, on Mud Island, in the Delaware, established a reputation for cool, determined bravery. In awarding honors to the hero of that event, Congress committed the awkward blunder of ordering “an elegant sword to be provided by the board of war, and presented to lieutenant colonel Smith, of Maryland,” an excellent officer, who was not in command at the time, and passed without notice, major Thayer, who was! This injustice, though unintentional, was deeply felt by major T., and excited strongly the feelings of his friends. It was pointed out and explained by general James M. Varnum, in 1786. But the mistake was one which Congress could not rectify, without

"making a bad thing worse." So it rested until the decease of colonel Smith, when the recollection was revived by an obituary notice, in which he was highly extolled as the defender of Mud Island. On reading the statements contained in that notice, Mr. Howland, who knew well the particulars of the affair, felt it due to the memory of major Thayer, and to the veracity of history, to correct them.—Accordingly, he wrote a narrative of the facts relative to the defence, which was published in a Providence paper, over the signature of "a Friend to Justice." The material portion of the narrative we give in his own words:

"These two forts, (Mercer and Mifflin,)" he says, "were erected to prevent the enemy's fleet from passing up the Delaware, and breaking through the chevaux de frise, to open their communication with Philadelphia, where their army was in possession. General Varnum commanded the American troops on the Jersey side of the Delaware, and he appointed lieutenant colonel Smith to the command of Mud Island, and colonel Christopher Greene commanded the Red Bank fort. His garrison was composed of the two Rhode Island regiments. Congress was then sitting at Yorktown, in Pennsylvania. Hopes were entertained that these forts might prevent the passage of the enemy. The public papers all spoke of Greene and Smith as the commanders of these most important posts. The power and capacity of Greene had been tested in Canada. He was with Montgomery at the storming

of Quebec, when that officer fell, and he was made a prisoner.

The British fleet was progressing up the Delaware, advanced by powerful floating batteries, and a distant firing commenced. At this crisis, colonel Smith requested of general Varnum permission to retire from the command of Mud Fort. He being rather unwell, permission was granted. The general, knowing that the battery on the island would be most exposed to violent attacks from the water craft of the enemy, did not wish to detach a field officer from the two regiments at Red Bank, one of whom must necessarily take the place vacated by Smith, but desired a voluntary offer. He proposed his views to the six field officers, and rejoiced to hear major Simeon Thayer offer himself. He immediately took the command of that station, which was considered as a forlorn hope. The attack with the heavy cannon and mortars of the fleet continued without any considerable intermission, till the mud batteries of the island were nearly leveled, and the number of men in continued action greatly reduced. The further defence was deemed impractical, and the general directed major Thayer to bring off the remains of the garrison. To aid their operations on the river, a brigade of Hessians from East Jersey attacked the fort at Red Bank, which they expected to carry by storm. This attack by the Hessian troops was repulsed by the two Rhode Island regiments in the fort. Their commander was killed, and the whole body was defeated with great loss. Congress, not having learned that the commander of Mud Island had been changed, voted

that an elegant sword be presented to colonel Greene, of the Red Bank fort, and another to colonel Samuel Smith, the commander of the Island, for their brave conduct in the defence of their several posts. The swords were to be made in France, and a year or two elapsed before their arrival and presentation, when colonel Smith received the one justly due to major Thayer, and but for the mistake made by Congress in the name of the officer who earned it, he would have received. General Varnum deeply regretted the mistake. . . . There never was a better officer of his rank, or a braver man in any army, than major Thayer, and the General Assembly of this State, as a testimony of their sense of his merits, and of the wrong done him, appointed him major general of the militia of the State."

The pension act of 1831, brought forward many candidates for its provisions. The active measures taken in their behalf, proved a heavy tax upon Mr. Howland, who was constantly applied to from all parts of the State, as well as from abroad, for necessary information. The numerous applications from Rhode Island excited surprise at the pension office. They seemed disproportioned to the size of the State. How so small a State could furnish so many survivors of the revolutionary army, was incomprehensible. The doubts entertained at the department led to vexatious delays, and proved serious impediments to the success of claimants. At this moment, Hon. Tristram Burges, then a member of Congress, wrote to Mr. Howland from

Washington, upon the subject. He said, that in frequent conversations at the pension office, these doubts were freely expressed, and that until removed, little progress could be made in securing justice for the survivors of the Rhode Island line. Explanations were asked for that he could not give, and he now turned to one for aid, whom he knew to be perfectly familiar with the ground of these claims. "If Mr. H." he added, "would prepare a paper explanatory thereof, a most important service would be rendered to the remnant of the revolutionary patriots."

Thus appealed to, Mr. Howland immediately wrote a pamphlet, entitled "Notices of the military services rendered by the militia, as well as by the enlisted troops, of the State of Rhode Island, during the Revolutionary War." In this pamphlet he shows that in the contest for freedom, Rhode Island was among the earliest and foremost, and that in various ways the State furnished more men for the service, according to population, than any other member of the union. He further shows, that during the war, every able bodied male, in the State, "except those of the profession of Quakers," between the ages of sixteen and sixty, bore arms; and that "thus for a considerable time, the whole militia of the State were from home, leaving the women, the boys under sixteen, and the men above sixty, to perform the farming or other work." Although, he adds, "we may not now find many living who had arrived at the age of thirty years in April, 1775, when the war began, yet when we consider

that the boys who were then only ten years old, were, two years before the close of the war, drafted for military service, we cannot be surprised at the number of applicants under the pension act."

The great number of marine applicants from Rhode Island, he accounts for by the fact, that a large proportion of the officers and men attached to the first naval force created by Congress, and commanded by admiral Esek Hopkins, were from this State. A copy of this pamphlet was sent to Mr. Burges. He presented it to the head of the department, and had the satisfaction of knowing that it accomplished the purpose for which it was written.

In 1834, Rev. James D. Knowles, then professor of pastoral duties in the Newton theological institution, published a Memoir of Roger Williams, a work of elaborate research, and of great value to the student of Rhode Island history. While collecting his materials, he applied to Mr. Howland, soliciting his assistance. No man then living was so competent to impart a certain description of information. For more than forty years, he had been a careful student of the character and career of Roger Williams. With all the publications and records accessible, throwing light upon the subject, he was familiar. In the earlier period of his inquiries, he had conversed with many of the oldest inhabitants of Providence, and gleaned from them the traditions received in childhood from aged people, concerning the habits, peculiarities, residence, and grave of Williams. With one man he had often conversed, who remembered his funeral, and had frequently visited the spot where

his remains repose. And thus was formed a chain of written and traditionary history, reaching back several years prior to his decease in 1682-3 or 1683. Happy in the opportunity to aid in elucidating the history of the first settlers of Rhode Island, he addressed to Mr. Knowles the following letters. They are several times referred to in his work, but are now for the first time published. As a contribution to what may yet be written of the sturdy opponent of Fox, they possess high value.

TO REV. JAMES D. KNOWLES :

PROVIDENCE, January 27th, 1831.

Dear Sir :—I received your letter of the 18th, a few days since, requesting information respecting Roger Williams, stating that you find a difficulty in ascertaining particulars respecting his more private history, &c. When I heard, some time since, of your intention to write his life, I expressed my apprehension that you had undertaken a difficult task ; difficult for want of materials. Doctor Belknap, who published the biography of several of the Pilgrims, was desirous of writing the life of Roger Williams. He accordingly wrote to Moses Brown, to Judge Howell, and to Doctor Hitchcock, for such information as they or their friends could furnish from our public records, or from any other source ; but they found the materials so scanty that he abandoned the subject as hopeless. Since that time, a deeper interest has been felt on this, as well as on other subjects relating to the history of the State, especially since the formation of the Rhode Island Historical Society. The most prominent object which this society have had in view, has been to collect materials for a history of the State ; and the history of the first half century of this town, and State, must necessarily embrace all that can be known of Williams and his associates.

The society have published the first number of an intended series—his *Key to the Indian language*,—and it has been in contemplation that their second number shall be composed wholly of such writings of Williams as were printed in his life-time, or which now remain in manuscript, either in the form of letters, or however or on whatever occasion they may have been composed. With this view, as well as others which might be mentioned, it is an object important with us to obtain these precious documents, that, if not published by the society, they may remain in the cabinet as forming a material item for the future historian.

As much as I venerate the memory and character of Roger Williams, not only as the founder of the State, but as the first who publicly and fearlessly advocated freedom of conscience in religious concerns, (or “concernments,” as he wrote it,) still I have been frequently tempted to speak as much in anger as in sorrow of his silence respecting what related to his own personal history. It appears that his great mind never for a moment embraced the idea that the generations who were to succeed him, would deem any notice of himself as worth their attention. When our society was first formed, it was proposed to fix on the day of his arrival here, as the day of its annual meeting, and till that day could be ascertained, we decided on the day of the date of the Charter of Charles II. We know that he left Rehoboth and landed in Mooshausic, in the year 1636, and this is all that is yet obtained, and for this we are indebted to Massachusetts records. Those who accompanied him or soon after joined him here, seem to have studiously observed the same silence respecting him as well as of themselves. It is hardly to be credited, considering how much he wrote, and how much of his writings have reached our time, that he should never incidentally, or even inadvertantly, have given some data which would now be valuable to fill up the

chasm of his history. In my correspondence with the Essex Historical Society, two or three years ago, observing the cloud which seemed to cover his private history, and not doubting that he must have written to some of his friends in Salem, after his expulsion, and arrival here, I inquired whether there were any letters, or fragments of letters, remaining in some of the old families there, which would shed light on this dark subject. But it appears that they know even less, if possible, of him than we do. We know where his homestead six-acre lot is, and can guess within an hundred feet where his house stood ; and we know that the estate passed (including his family burying ground,) during the life-time of his grandson, into the hands of strangers. And we know where his grave is, and that his remains have been several times sold as a part of the common earth, attaching a kind of sacrilege to each transfer. You very properly mention that much of the history of Providence, and of Rhode Island, will be connected with his life. Under this impression, that the history of the one is inseparably connected with the other, our society are directing its labors, in the collections they are making, having primarily in view the history of the State, especially of the first century, including what relates to the original proprietors,—the Indians. All that we at present know of the history of Roger Williams, would not fill more than half a dozen pages, or more properly might form a preface to a history of the State.

Much of the early history of this or other States, can only be obtained from records and accounts which now lie hidden in the public offices belonging to the colonial department in England ; and by our circular addressed to the several historical and antiquarian societies in the United States, we have called upon them to join us in our application to Congress for the proper measures to procure copies under the auspices and at the expense of the nation. Our society have now an agent in England, instruct-

ed to obtain from parish, college, and other sources, what may relate to Roger Williams, the place of his birth, records of his baptism, ordination, settlement as a minister, or any notice which may be obtained of him previous to his coming to this country, and which would form an important item in his biography.

From all I have written, you will probably infer that I think you have projected a work for which you have not yet sufficient materials to satisfy your own or your readers' expectations. My opinion, (whether it is worth anything or not,) frequently expressed at our meetings of the board of trustees, is, that the best history or life of Roger Williams which can now be written, will be to collect all that he has written on every subject, including private letters, and print them in one volume, with such notices of him in the preface as that we have prefixed to his *Key of the Indian language*.

I know that a book can be made about Roger Williams, and a book of large size, as a long sermon can be made from a short text of scripture, and it would be valuable and useful out of New England. But here, the case is different. All, with one consent, esteem him as an advocate of political, religious toleration or freedom, yet his life was marked with contention with those who differed from him in religious belief and observances. The Quakers will never forget his opposition to George Fox, and the establishment of their sect in this land of freedom of conscience, or the title page of his book, "*A Fox Digged out of his Burrows*," &c. The Congregational descendants of the Pilgrims denounce him for his illiberality in excluding all the churches in New England from communion with his church in Salem, and the Episcopalians think as hard of him for the cause of this exclusion; that is, because governor Winthrop and his people would not wholly exclude the members of the Church of England from their fellowship; and the Calvinist Baptists have little better

opinion of him for being a freewiller ; for the first church in Providence, of which he was a principal founder, never practised or approved of singing as a part of public worship till they were proselyted to this, as well as to the Calvinistic faith, by Dr. Manning, after the year 1770. The fame and glory of Roger Williams must, therefore, be proclaimed and perpetuated as founded on his wisdom and benevolence as a legislator, rather than on his theological character ; for as a legislator or politician he founded a flourishing State on the basis of freedom of conscience in religious concerns ; and in Europe and America the honor of this will be fully accorded and ascribed to him.

I have reason, sir, to apprehend, that after you may have read these desultory remarks, you will say " all this is not complying with my request." I agree that in some measure it is not ; but if this is received kindly as it is meant, I may, as time and opportunity present, send you something in a more tangible shape. When I began to write, I merely intended respectfully to acknowledge the receipt of yours, and to let you understand that, as far as in my power, I should comply with your request ; but on the subject to which this relates, I have so long felt a deep interest, that I did not know where to stop. Garburity is the weakness, or perhaps the sin, which most easily besets old age ; but I will conclude with assurances of high respect and regard.

JOHN HOWLAND.

REV. JAMES D. KNOWLES.

PROVIDENCE, Feb. 23, 1831.

REV. MR. KNOWLES :

Dear Sir :—Although I received yours of the 4th inst., by Mr. Langley, in due season, yet my time is so necessarily occupied, especially at this season of the year, with the business of the town treasurer's office, and other engagements, that I have had no time to answer it 'till this

present rainy day ; and to answer some of your inquiries, further time will be required to examine the public records for dates and other particulars. I shall send with this the twelfth number of the Literary Repository, which contains a letter from R. Williams to John Whipple, the original of which I have had more than forty years in my possession, and the copy I furnished fifteen or sixteen years ago for that number of the Repository, with the remarks which follow it. These remarks embody the views and opinions I had then formed of R. W., and at this time you can better judge how far they are correct. I feel a full confidence that I possess no sectarian prejudices against him. I was born in the bosom of the Baptist church, my ancestors, in the maternal line, were, for three or four generations, members of that communion, and were among the first founders of the Second Baptist church in Newport, and it is probable I should still have been classed with them had not the first church in Providence fallen into the errors (as I considered it.) of John Calvin. From the high respect and esteem which I felt for Doct. Manning, who was my early friend, I was persuaded to write his biography, as published in the tenth number of the Repository, which, although written in haste, and without any time for copying or revision, was well approved by several members of his communion, whom I esteem good judges.

In answer to your first question, "What were the precise bounds of the land ceded to Williams by the Sachems?" I must say that precision is not to be expected. I am rather of opinion that the first grant was a verbal one, though, if I had time to examine, it might prove that I am mistaken. The following is a copy of the second grant, which you will see refers to the terms of the first, which indeed precedes it :

"At Nanhiggansett the 24th of the first month, commonly called March, the 2d year of the plantation or planting of Mooshasick or Providence. Memorandum, that

wee Caunonicus and Miantinomee the 2 chief Sachims of Nanhiggansett having 2 years since sould unto Roger Williams, the lands and meddows upon the 2 fresh Rivers called Mooshasick and Wanasquatuckqt, doe now by these presents establish and confirm the bounds of these lands from the River and fields of Pautuckqt the great hill of Notaquoncanot on the northwest and the town of Maushapauge on the west.*

We also, in consideration of the many kindnesses and services he hath continually done for us, both with our friends of Massatusetts as also at Quinitticut and Apaum or Plymouth, we do freely give unto him all that land from those Rivers reaching to Pawtuxett river, as also the grass and meadows upon the said Pawtuxett river, in witness whereoff we have hereunto sett our hands.

The mark of  CAUNAUNICUS.

The mark of † MEAUNTUNOMI.

In the presence of

The mark of —O— SEATASH.

The mark of < ASSOTEMEUIT.

1639. Md 3 moneth 9 die. This was all again confirmed by Miantenime. He acknowledged that he also (oblit) and gave up the streames of Patuckett and Patuxett without limits, we might have for our use of cattle.

Witness hereto, ROGER WILLIAMS.

BENEDICT ARNOLD.

A true copy, per me,

JOSEPH TORRY, General Recorder.

Your second interrogation, "What became of the right of the proprietors," &c., I do not comprehend. The third question, "What was the difficulty which arose with the

* The great hill, Notaquoncanot, mentioned as a bound, is three miles west from Weybosset bridge. Mashapaug is about two miles south of the hill.—J. H.

proprietors? was Roger Williams blamable for the difficulties?" is plainer. The difficulty, as far as I have yet ascertained, arose from two causes.—First, they complained that as they advanced their share of the payments made to satisfy the Indians, both those who lived on the ceded land as well as to the chief Sachems, Williams claimed the grants as made only to himself individually, whereas he ought to have written the Indian deeds as conveying to him *and his associates*. Thus they were compelled to hold their titles under him, when they were a joint concern. But the great contention arose from the informal consent of the Indians as contained in the 1639 memom. *up streams without limits for the use of cattle*. This Wm. Harris contended was an absolute grant of the fee of the soil. This assumption Williams vehemently contended against. In a long letter to the Commissioners, he says, "One among us (not I,) recorded a testimony or memorandum of a courtesie added upon request by the Sachems in the words 'up streams without limits.' The courtesie was requested and granted, that being shortened. in bounds by the Sachems, because of the Indians about us, it might be no offence if our few cows fed up the rivers where nobody dwelt, and home again at night.— This hasty unadvised memorandum W. H. interprets of bounds set to our town by the Sachems . . . and yet upon no consideration given, nor the Sachems knowledge or hand, nor witness nor date, nor for what term of time this kindness should continue. . . . But all the Sachems and Indians when they heard of such an interpretation, they cried *Commoobin*, lying and stealing, as such a cheat as stunk in their Pagan nostrils."

This dispute in which the Indians were involved, I suppose gave a company from Rhode Island occasion to step in and make of the Indians what was called the *westquan-org purchase* of the disputed lands. For this opinion I have no written authority; but it appears probable, from

the circumstance of the law-suits derived from that purchase, which continued many years after the death of the first planters; and, as in a spirit of prophecy, Roger Williams, in the letter to Whipple, says, "and what the tearing consequence yet will be, is known only to the Most Holy and Only Wise."

Question 4th. What was the six acre lot, and how did Roger Williams obtain the What Cheer land? The first comers squatted (as they say in Maine,) on such places as were most convenient, and planted their corn on the old Indian's fields, as they could agree among themselves; and when their number had increased, they laid out what is now the main street, on the east side of the river, and divided the land eastward of the street, into lots of six acres each, being of equal breadth, and extending back to what is now Hope street. There were eventually one hundred and two of these six acre lots, extending from mile-end brook, which enters the river a little north of Fox Point to Harrington's lane on the north, and which lane is now the dividing line between Providence and North Providence. Each proprietor had one of these six acre lots, on which he built his house. How they were located, whether by lot or by draft, or by choice, I am not informed; but it is probable the first comers had their choice, as the six acre lot of Roger Williams was the place where he first landed and had built his house, and the street now Bowen street, leading from Main to Benefit street, divides that part of his lot nearly in the middle. The object of locating themselves so near together, was for security and mutual aid against the Indians, and in conformity to the practice in Europe, where the farmers, instead of settling on the land they cultivate, are huddled together in villages. Each proprietor besides his town lot, as it was called, took up out-land, upland and meadow, by grant of the whole in proprietors' meeting. Their grants were entered on the records. None of them at first took up sufficient for a

farm in one place. Each one besides his upland, as it was termed, or planting land, had in another place, and frequently quite distant, his proportion of meadow land. This was necessary because there was no hay seed known or in use. They had no grass for winter fodder, but bog or salt meadow or thatch; and each must have his share of this, or his cattle would perish, or brouse in the woods in winter. This will account for your asking how he obtained the What Cheer land. He had his location of upland south of the What Cheer Cove, where the rope-walks now stand. This is the only remnant of his property which now remains in possession of any of his descendants. The present proprietors are Williams Thayer, and his sister Brown. Their grandmother was great grandmother of Roger.

To your next question, "Where is the copy of the first charter?" I answer, I think you will find it in Hazard's collections. The next question you propose, "do you know anything of his connection with the Baptist Church as a minister?" I object to the direct and positive form of the interrogatory, for knowing and believing in this case are different. I will not refer you to Morton, or to Winthrop, or Cotton Mather, as their opinions were formed from circumstances and conjectures, but to Richard Scott, to Morgan Edwards, and to tradition. Edwards in his account of the Baptist Churches, says: "Roger Williams became their minister at the time they were settled in 1638, but in a few years resigned the care thereof to Messrs. Brown and Wickenden. Assistant to Mr. Williams was Rev. Ezekiel Holliman, of whom I can learn no more than that he came to Providence about the year 1636, and was the man who baptised Roger Williams?" This short account contains no positive evidence, but rather confirms the tradition that there were no Baptists here before the year 1638. It has never been said, as I understand, that Mr. Williams was a Baptist when he left Sa-

lem, or when he arrived here. How long after the event, before he adopted the opinions or order of the Baptists is still uncertain. Tradition, derived through Justice Brown, who informed some persons now living or lately deceased, that he remembered the funeral of Williams, says that Chad Brown was the first minister of the church here, and that the church was first formed about three years after the arrival of Roger Williams and his associates.* My opinion is, that for several years after they became Baptists, they had no regular ministry, but that, as they had no meeting house, and were but few in number, they each exercised their gifts as brethren now do in conference meetings, which at that day was called prophesying.

It is a singular fact, that a man of so much candor in other matters as Morgan Edwards, should, by his mode of expression, attempt to disguise the fact that Williams dissented from his Baptist friends, and withdrew his connexion from them, and disowning the validity of their ordinances became entirely separate, by saying, "but in a few years resigned the care thereof (that is of the church,) to Messrs. Brown and Wickenden." Nothing but a desire to place the name of so great a man as Roger Williams at the head of the catalogue of Baptist ministers could have induced him to do this.

Richard Scott joined the company here in the year 1638, and was one of the hundred and two purchasers of Providence. My manuscript authority says, he was "a man of good abilities and acquirements, first of the Baptist denomination of Providence, and who afterwards turned to the Quakers." Speaking of Williams he says, "I walked with him in the Baptist way about three or four months, in which time he broke from the society and declared at large the grounds and reason of it—that their baptism

* Those who conversed with old Mr. John Angell on this subject, say that he confirmed this, that Chad Brown was the first minister. J. Angell was a Gortonian and the last of the sect.

“ could not be right because it was not administered by an apostle. After that he set up a way of seeking with two or three that had dissented with him, by way of preaching and praying, and there he continued a year or two ’till two of the three left him. That which took most with him was to get honour among men,” &c.

Now, if we could ascertain the time when Scott became a Baptist, the question would be decided (as far as the credibility of Scott goes,) how long Roger Williams may have been a Baptist. Scott walked with him, in that way three or four months, when Williams left them. Scott arrived in 1638. The same year, or according to others, the year after this, 1639, the company became Baptists. Did he then join them, or at what time after? Here we are in the dark. It appears that Scott continued a Baptist till the Quakers came. The first Quakers arrived in 1656, but George Fox did not come till 1672. Whether he was brought over by the first missionaries, or by the preaching of Fox, is not so material. Scott continued an inhabitant here till his death. His family then removed to Smithfield. He has left a numerous posterity. Job Scott, whose life and travels you doubtless have read, was descended from him, and our friend, the honorable Nicholas Brown, is a descendant of his; his grandmother was a Scott. The college was built in 1770. On the question among the founders of it, where on what lot to place the building, they decided on the present site of the old college, because it was the home lot of Chad Brown, the first minister of the Baptist church. Other land could have been obtained, but the reason given prevailed in fixing the site. Had the impression been prevalent that Roger Williams was the first minister or principal founder of the society, his home lot could have been purchased, which was a situation full as eligible for the purpose. If any doubts rested in the minds of the gentlemen, at that time, as to the validity of the claim of Chad Brown to this pre-

ference, perhaps the circumstance of Williams deserting the order, and protesting against it, might have produced the determination in favor of Brown. I know that from the circumstance, that Roger Williams was the first who arrived here and began the settlement of the town, and he and his companions afterwards becoming Baptists, the formation of the church as well as of the town and State has generally been attributed to him, especially as he was an ordained minister; though under the former system, it was supposed, or taken for granted, that he must have been the first minister of the new church. To these conjectures and suppositions we have opposed the foregoing traditions.

Thus I have as well as in my power answered the questions proposed, and leave it to your better judgment to decide, especially as you may have better evidence in the case, and of which I am not possessed.

It is a singular circumstance, that no house for worship was erected in this town until sixty-four years after the settlement. The first meeting-house was built in 1700, on a lot given for that use by elder Pardon Tillinghast. In good weather they assembled in an orchard; in bad weather in private houses. By this, it would appear that their aversion to paying or maintaining ministers, arose as much from the love of money as from conscientious scruples, as they refused to contribute to building a meeting house for the convenience of the congregation. Your last question, did he ever reside in Narragansett, and did he preach to the Indians? I never understood that he resided there except on occasional visits. I have in my possession at present, a testimony in his own hand writing, dated "Nanhiggonsek, 24 July, 1679, (ut vulgo)." This, I suppose, was written at the house of Richard Smith, near what is now called Wickford, in North Kingstown, as the testimony is in favor of Smith's title to his lands against the claims of Connecticut, Rhode Island, and others. I

never heard of his preaching to the Indians. It is not probable, as he had ceased to be a preacher, before he had learned the Indian language ; and not belonging to any denomination of christians, and being a *seeker* of further light, and waiting for a new revelation, how could he preach, or what would he preach ? No doubt he frequently gave them some good advice. His kind and benevolent disposition would prompt him to this.

With respect, yours,

JOHN HOWLAND.

I have no time to copy or correct this. Please to take it as it is.

PROVIDENCE, Feb. 2, 1832.

REV. J. D. KNOWLES :—

Dear Sir :—Your letter, by Mr. Langley, of January 25th, is before me ; but the questions on which I would be glad to furnish information, are most of them involved in so much obscurity, I scarcely know where to begin in reply. The first thing I attempted on the receipt of it, was to copy that part of the long letter you refer to, which is in my possession ; but from my many engagements, could not finish it in the time Mr. Langley fixed for his return to Boston. It will throw some light on some of the subjects in question ; on others, it will only render the darkness more visible. The feud between Roger Williams and William Harris, appears there to have originated in Harris' contending for the title of the *courtesy*, as W. calls it, of *up streams without limits*, though it is probable there were other causes existing for such bitter and implacable enmity as Williams exhibits. I regret that the remainder of the manuscript is lost, as by what appears we cannot ascertain the authority or commission of the gentlemen to whom it was addressed, by whom were they appointed, &c. The number of the claims to the land,

as well as the titles under which they claimed, has surprised me as it will you. Besides the injury and injustice done to the Indians by Harris' contending that the *courtesy* was a real *grant* of the land up stream, the opposition to which is honorable to the character of Williams, there was another cause which operated to keep up the contention, though it is not mentioned in his long letter. The men of Pawtuxet, as they are called in the old papers, were originally a part of the company who were first associated with Williams and others, in the Providence lands. They had branched off, and settled or claimed the lands on that river independent of the original proprietors of Providence. W. Har., as Williams writes his name, was one of the Pawtuxet company, and Carpenter, who Williams says was *one* with Harris, was also a Pawtuxet man. The feud, therefore, was not wholly between Williams and Harris, but drew the two companies in opposition to each other; and Williams appears to be the leader of one, and Harris of the other. The first bounds of the Indian grants, as you will see by the copy I sent you, extended no further than to Newtaconkinok Hill and Mashapaug, about four miles west of the great bridge. The second extended from Pawtuxet river to Pawtuxet, and my impression is, that the men of Pawtuxet claimed, though I know not on what pretence, the south part of these lands, and joined Harris in contending for the *up streams* title. The confirmation of this title, mentioned so often, was signed at Narragansett by the grandson of Canonicus, "29th of 3d month, 1659," and confirmed again by his great-grandson, 28th April, 1660. The validity of both these confirmations Williams disputed, as they both referred to the former grant of "up streams," and added the right to plant, &c., as Harris, who wrote the deed for them, made them believe that the former grant contained such privilege. But it seems Mr. Williams did not deny their confirming the former grant

of "up streams" for the use of cattle, but as the young sachems were deceived about the extent of the former grant, which they only intended to confirm, a cheat was put upon them by inserting the right of *planting*, &c., though on this definition he is not explicit, but very obscure, and leaves us to conjecture and guess out his meaning. And it is singular that on a subject in which his feelings entered so deeply, and of which he says so much, and to men of such characters and standing as he was addressing, that he did not state the words of the deed of confirmation, and show to what part he objected, with his reasons for the same.

Admitting his reasons to be good and well founded, at the time the deeds of confirmation were executed in 1659 and 1660, yet, at the date of his address to the commissioners in 1677, the case was materially altered; for before that time, it appears that the town of which he was so conspicuous a member, had assumed these deeds as giving a good title; for in March, 1660, six men were appointed to fix the bounds of the town, seven miles west from Fox Hill, or as we now call it, Fox Point; and on the 4th of June, 1660, the seven mile line was established, as the west bounds of the town for the first division, and the rest of the land to be disposed of as the town should after decide. At the date of his long communication to the commissioners, 1677, the whole territory, as far west as the Connecticut line, (twenty miles,) was in peaceable possession of the Providence proprietors, or of them and the men of Pawtuxet. The power and right of the Indians had ceased the year before, by the conquest of the Indians and the conclusion of the war, and only a few fugitives were left, whose power and claims of right to the soil had ceased, by what politicians term the right of conquest. They had no sachem left to claim or exercise the power of making treaties, and were permitted to live as tenants of the colonists, and to be assisted by them in their means of living

when they could not support themselves by hunting. I say why, under these new circumstances, did he labor to invalidate the title of the proprietors to the land to the line of the Connecticut? If their title deeds were of no force, what title had he or his associates to any of the land? By what authority did they divide it among themselves, or sell any of it to new comers? The only reason that I can imagine,—and it is only imagination, for I have no information on the subject—is, that Harris and the men of Pawtuxet claimed a large part of the land, to the exclusion of the Providence proprietors. Of this matter I hope to gain information, which I shall take pleasure in communicating to you; but I confess I am in the fog respecting it at present.

Whether the new allotments or divisions which you mention, in which fifty or twenty-five acres were granted, were west of the first bounds at Mashapaug and east of the seven mile line, or whether they were west of the seven mile line, I do not at present know, having had no time to examine the records since I received yours about this and other queries you propose. I hope to write you further before long, if it please Him in whose hands my breath is, to grant me further time; for my health is failing, and my complaint or affection of the lungs, I deem incurable. Even if my health was good, my age, being now in my seventy-fifth year, would admonish me that I shall soon have no interest in the subjects now examined, or in any others which relate solely to this state of being.

I have mentioned, above, of the six men establishing, under votes of the town, the seven mile line. I propose to copy from the old papers, or records, the particulars for your further information, as also the act of incorporation, if I can find it, for although there is such a thing, I have never seen it; but this communication, as far as it goes, will furnish answers to some of your questions. The Historical Society have now four different commit-

tees at work, examining the old records and papers in the four original towns, namely, Providence, Warwick, Portsmouth and Newport, and making copies, &c. I say papers, as well as records, for many material old transactions remain loose, having never been entered on the books. Thus copies, should they be brought together within a reasonable time, may be of great use to you in the work in which you are engaged; but I fear the progress will be slow, as committee men, who work for nothing in the different counties, will take their own time and leisure. If what I have here written should appear without form, I wish you to exercise candor, as I write under many disadvantages as I can secure a moment's time; and I wish you rather to doubt my capacity and abilities, than my good intentions.

With great respect,

Yours,

JOHN HOWLAND.

PROVIDENCE, March 5th, 1832.

(Anniversary of the Boston Massacre.)

REV. JAMES D. KNOWLES:

My Dear Sir:—The last bundle of documents was made out and directed to you, three or four weeks before they were sent, waiting for an opportunity, which Mr. Langley at last found, and I hope it has arrived safe. The answers to your questions must come from me limb by limb, and I hope you will excuse me for want of a regular course of detail. I now enclose a sheet of copies of old papers, which I have found in one of my drawers, I not having had time to examine the clerk's office for anything more applicable to the several questions. In writing the biography of Roger Williams, I conceive it is necessary to state the circumstances, or the state of society, in which he lived. Many things in his history which on first view may appear strange, will be accounted for favor-

able to him by such an examination. This can be done under the broken and detached state of old transactions, only by examining a variety of papers; and although they may relate to different subjects and different times, a judgment may be formed of the singular situation in which he was placed. I therefore send these disconnected pieces. Some of them will shed light on some things of which you wish to be informed.

I have not found anything fully to satisfy my mind when the first Weybosset bridge was built. A ferry was kept there before there was any bridge. But what you mention about an old vote, or order to build one from Thomas Olney's land, I think must have been further up the river, either the Mooshausuck or Wonasquatucket, as I have been frequently told by Nathan Waterman, that teams and men on horseback used to cross the river, (before his day,) across the clam bed opposite Angell's land, (at low tide,) and land somewhere on the western shore. The Thomas Olney lot was where the Knight Dexter tavern now is, and Angell's was the next south, including part of the Baptist meeting-house lot and Steeple street. In front of this lay the shoal place called the clam bed. The paper on the sheet relative to raising money to build bridges, reads as if there had not been one before that date. But I have no doubt there was one before; and Abbott's lease seems to confirm it, although that is dated a short time after the subscription paper, and if it had then been a new bridge, he would have called it so.

You ask for a copy of the act incorporating the town. I have not yet searched for it, but intend to. If I had lived in those days, I should have opposed receiving such an act from the General Assembly. The four original towns *made* the General Assembly, and they could confer no power which was not already possessed by the old towns. New towns might be incorporated, but it was

absurd for the old ones to receive authority from their own agents or deputies. We saw and felt the disadvantage of this pretended act of incorporation two or three years ago, when the school bill was discussed and passed. The Assembly then claimed the power to restrict the towns from laying taxes for the support of schools, as they said no such power was granted them in their acts of incorporation, and that all the power of the towns was derived from special agents of the General Assembly. But the truth is, the old towns had, from their first settlement, the power to assess taxes for this as well as for other purposes, and they did not relinquish it when they received corporate powers. The acts of incorporation could not grant or restrict, but only confirm the powers already existing, which were not contrary to the laws of England.

With respect and regard, yours,

JOHN HOWLAND.

P. S. Write to me as often as you please, on any question on which you desire information, and if in my power, I will furnish it with pleasure.

In one of the preceding letters, Mr. Howland refers to a notice of Roger Williams, written by him and published in the Rhode Island Literary Repository in 1815. This is a concise account of his arrival at Plymouth and the cause of his leaving there; his connection with the First Church in Salem, and his subsequent flight from that place; his settlement in Providence, and the peculiar state of his company of emigrants as "an assemblage of individuals, each possessing and exercising all the attributes of sovereignty in and over his own person and independent of his contemporaries," forcing upon them the necessity of a social compact based on "allegiance to the king of Great Britain;"

and the cases of conscience growing out of their peculiar form of government. These points are now familiar to the general reader of history, and need not be repeated here. In closing his sketch Mr. Howland says:

“Mr. Williams was highly respected by the native princes. Miantonomo, who stood among the sachems like Agamemnon among the Grecian kings, paid him great deference and respect, and his good offices were acknowledged by the people of Massachusetts, in preserving peace between them and the Narragansett sachems. The Indians were numerous and powerful, and had they united and been so disposed, it was in their power to have extirpated the English settlers. To the influence which Mr. Williams had acquired among them, and which was strengthened by his perfect knowledge of their language, may in some degree be attributed the long continued peace, which was enjoyed by our ancestors of this and neighboring colonies.

“Several of the associates of Mr. Williams in the establishment of the new colony, were men of eminent abilities, and probably understood the nature of civil and religious liberty better than many ministers of state at that time in Europe, where a few years later, these subjects were drawn into discussion, and employed the talents of the ablest men, especially during the reign of Charles the First, and under the Commonwealth.”

That Mr. Howland held Williams in high esteem, these letters, as well as what he has written and spoken elsewhere, abundantly show. He honored

him as the founder of "the first government in the world that established freedom of conscience in religious concerns as the basis of their constitution." At the same time they indicate what he never concealed, and therefore what the writer is not authorized to omit, that his admiration was not unqualified. In his estimate of Williams's character, he discriminated between the magistrate and the ecclesiastic. To the integrity and worth of the former he paid sincere homage; but with the proclivity of the latter to metaphysical "disputation" he could not sympathize, and he often expressed regret that the intellectual force expended upon theological dogmas, had not been consecrated to laying the foundation of a system of popular education, imbued with the spirit of christianity, as the surest safeguard against tyranny in the State and intolerance in the Church.

CHAPTER XII.

The year 1836 was one of unusual activity and mental labor with Mr. Howland. In addition to the ordinary duties which fully occupied his business hours, he prepared two historical lectures, and made extensive researches to supply materials for several other public discourses, besides furnishing facts and dates of old transactions to numerous applicants. The event of the year which most deeply interested him was the second centennial celebration of the landing of Roger Williams and his associates in Providence. This took place on the fifth day of August, under the joint direction of committees appointed by the Rhode Island Historical Society and by the City Council.* The day was ushered in by the ringing of bells and a salute of one hundred guns. A military and civic procession marched through several of the principal streets to the First Baptist meeting house, where an interesting and instructive oration was delivered by Hon. John Pitman, in the presence of an immense audience. The part assigned Mr. Howland in these

*Committee of the Historical Society—William R. Staples, Thomas H. Webb, John Carter Brown. Committee of the Council—Thomas B. Fenner, Amherst Everett, Joseph Cady.

ceremonies, was the reading of the following beautiful hymn, written for the occasion by Albert G. Greene, Esq.

1. THOU who did'st form the rolling spheres;
Whose word unnumbered world's obey;
And in whose sight days are as years,
A thousand years but as a day;
2. THOU, who did'st guard that fearless band
Who fled from persecutions rod,
And sought this wild and desert land,
Twice exiles for the truth of God;
3. THOU, upon whom in their distress,
By woes assailed, by dangers tried,
Here in the howling wilderness,
Their firm, unfaltering "Hope" relied;
4. THOU, unto whom, in that dark hour,
They prayed that this their home might be
A spot where uncontrolled by power
The free born soul might worship Thee;
5. THOU, unto whom then rose their prayer
That all the race of men might own
That living truth, that freedom share,
Which they had here upheld alone;
6. Grant that the day for which they prayed,
Shall o'er the world in splendor ope:
That day of truth, though long delayed,
Will come at last, "IN GOD WE HOPE."

Mr. Howland read poetry with a nice appreciation of its sentiment, and was remarkably happy in rendering the author's meaning. This service, alike suited to his years and his official relation to the christian church, was performed in a very spirited and impressive manner. In accordance with the practice of the last century, he read the hymn entire, and then "deaconed" off two lines at a time, which were sung to the tune of Old Hundred by

The first, referring to the Rhode Island delegation in Congress, was responded to by Hon. Asher Robbins. The second was to "the memory of Canonicus and Miantonomi, from whom the first company of emigrants obtained the fee simple of Providence Plantations." The third was to "governor Winslow of the old colony of Plymouth—the public and private benefactor of Roger Williams." And the fourth was to "Clarke, Coddington, and their sixteen associates, who by the aid of Roger Williams, possessed the beautiful Island of Aquidneck, and established the second colony of Rhode Island." These sentiments show not only the thoughts he had associated with the day, but also his aptitude for appropriately blending with it names deservedly dear to the founder and the early settlers of Rhode Island, and which will ever be held in honor by their posterity.

The day was closed as it was ushered in, with the roar of cannon and the ringing of bells. In the evening there was a brilliant display of fireworks; and thus terminated a jubilee of extraordinary interest to the citizens of Providence, and the thousands from abroad who participated in it. It was a worthy remembrance of one who penetrated the wilderness "not only that he might worship God according to his own convictions of truth and duty, but that he might prepare an asylum where the persecuted of all sects might enjoy the same religious freedom."*

On the 30th of April, 1839, the New York Historical Society celebrated the semi-centennial an-

* Channing.



niversary of the first inauguration of George Washington as president of the United States, and the organization of the general government under the Federal constitution. Letters of invitation were addressed to distinguished survivors of the revolutionary period, to the Historical Societies of other States, and to various public functionaries, requesting their attendance. The Rhode Island Historical Society responded to the invitation, by appointing ten delegates to attend the celebration. Three only of the number were able to be present, viz: John Howland, Rev. Edward B. Hall, D. D., and Dr. Joseph Mauran. The occasion was one of extraordinary interest, and seldom has an anniversary been graced by so numerous a company of gentlemen, eminent for talent, station and influence. The oration was delivered in the presence of an immense concourse of people, by John Quincy Adams, the sixth president of the United States. It occupied about two hours in the delivery, "and by the extraordinary ability, learning and eloquence which it displayed, fully sustained the most sanguine anticipations of the friends of the distinguished orator." It closed with these suggestive and impressive words:

"Fellow citizens, the ark of your covenant is the declaration of independence. Your Mount Ebal is the confederacy of separate State sovereignties, and your Mount Gerizim is the Constitution of the United States. • In that scene of tremendous and awful solemnity, narrated in the Holy Scriptures, there is not a curse pronounced against the people,

upon Mount Ebal, not a blessing promised them upon Mount Gerizim, which your posterity may not suffer or enjoy, from your and their adherence to, or departure from, the principles of the declaration of independence, practically interwoven in the constitution of the United States. Lay up these principles, then, in your hearts, and in your souls—bind them for signs upon your hands, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes—teaching them to your children, speaking of them when sitting in your houses, when walking by the way, when lying down and when rising up—write them upon the door plates of your houses, and upon your gates—cling to them as the issues of life—adhere to them as the cords of your eternal salvation. So may your children's children at the next return of this day of jubilee, after a full century of experience under your national constitution, celebrate it again in the full enjoyment of all the blessings recognized by you in the commemoration of this day, and of all the blessings promised to the children of Israel upon Mount Gerizim, as the reward of obedience to the law of God."

The public exercises were followed by a dinner at the City Hotel. At six o'clock, P. M., the society with invited guests, sat down to elegantly furnished tables, at which Peter G. Stuyvesant presided, assisted by Philip Hone, judge Betts, and Charles King. After the removal of the cloth, toasts were proposed, and appropriate speeches were made, by P. G. Stuyvesant, president Adams, Philip Hone, general Winfield Scott, John Davis,

Judge of the U. S. District Court for Massachusetts, William Pennington, governor of New Jersey, William Willis, of Portland, Me., and several others.

Of this festive company, no one entered more heartily into the spirit of the hour than did Mr. Howland. The presence of the venerable patriots, colonel John Trumbull and general Morgan Lewis, gave freshness to the memories of days when the hope of freedom for the American continent and the world, rested on an army seemingly insignificant for numbers, half clad, poorly fed, and inadequately provided with munitions for defence; and as he listened to the tributes paid to the public and private character of Washington, and to the worth of the actors in the struggle for independence, the fire of patriotism burned anew in his aged bosom; his eye brightened, his pulse quickened, and for the moment in imagination, he was once more at the side of his beloved commander, pressing to the rescue of his oppressed country.

A sentiment having been offered, relating to Rhode Island, it became the duty of Mr. Howland, as president of the Historical Society, to respond, which he did briefly in the following terms:

"The citizens of our several States are united by stronger bonds than those engrossed on parchment. The place of present residence, in many instances, may not describe the home of the individual; yet in a larger view, we cannot be said to be separate from our friends and connections while we are within the limits of the union. The first

instance in history in which Rhode Island and New York became connected, took place in 1665, when Thomas Willett was appointed mayor of this city. He afterwards returned to Rhode Island, where his monument now exists. To thousands of other ties of union, the Antiquarian and Historical Societies will necessarily add, in promoting the common object in which they are engaged, and to which this day's celebration points as the brightest page in American history. In connecting the past with the present, I offer this sentiment:

The memory of Thomas Willett, the first mayor of New York.

The next morning, Mr. Howland, accompanied by his daughter, set out for Trenton, to revisit the battle-ground of 1776. They arrived about 11 o'clock, and put up at a hotel. On making known his object to the landlord, and inquiring if any person resided there familiar with the points of interest, he was introduced to a son of one of the soldiers who participated in the events of that day, and whose antiquarian tastes had led him to a careful study of the battle-ground, as well as to treasure up the traditions and authenticated facts connected with it. The moment the gentleman was made acquainted with Mr. Howland's wishes, he kindly proffered his services as a guide, and they were soon on a ramble over town. Two more congenial spirits seldom met. They talked of Washington, ever a welcome theme to Mr. Howland, of the wisdom of his military movements, and the confidence his presence always inspired. They spoke of the perils attending the

crossing the Delaware; the capture of the Hessians; the bivouac that lulled Cornwallis into twelve hours' delay of his contemplated attack; the surprise of the British commander when he discovered the escape of his expected prey; the forced night-march upon Princeton, and its triumph; and the results to the world of the unequal but successful contest for freedom. Thus they went on, one contributing reminiscences from his personal experience, and the other drawing from the ample stores of a richly furnished historic mind; and as the latter proceeded with a succession of anecdote and remark, his animated tones seemed to revitalize his not very vigorous companion, and to make him insensible of fatigue.

Some changes had taken place in the aspect of Trenton since Mr. Howland last saw it, yet fewer than had marked the progress of time in many other towns. Some of the old dwellings remained, and as he passed along, his tenacious memory enabled him readily to recognize and point out localities signalized by martial deeds. "Down that street," said he, "our brigade covered the retreat of the party sent forward to make a show of resisting the enemy's entrance into town from that quarter. Passing that street, we received their fire, and drove them back with the play of our cannon. On this bridge I stood, when our troops, rushing over, pressed me hard against the horse rode by Washington. In yonder field our men formed. Within this line our camp-fires were built. And now," he added in a slightly excited voice, "I want to show my daughter where I

scraped away the snow and lay down in my blanket that night." Approaching a mansion with a flower-garden in front, he stopped, and looking round for an instant, exclaimed, "ah, there is the place," at the same time pointing to the centre of the garden. His guide was delighted with the quickness of his recollections, and said, "let us open the gate and go in." In a moment they were standing on the memorable spot. The loud talking of the party attracted an elderly lady to the door, who showed a little surprise at the intrusion. His friend immediately explained. "Here," said he, "is one of Washington's soldiers, who is showing the place where he slept the night after crossing the bridge." On learning who Mr. Howland was, and that he came from a State distinguished for the important service rendered to the revolutionary cause, he was cordially invited in, and during a brief stay received from his hostess, herself of patriotic descent, the most delicate attentions.

With his genial friend, the flow of conversation was unbroken until the hour for departure, when, entering the cars, he was soon on his way to New York. Owing to the neglect of the engineer and fireman, who had fallen asleep at their post, the fire went down, the steam failed, and near Newark the train came to a dead stop. The time required to "fire up," and set the engine again in motion, delayed the arrival in New York until near midnight, when he received the congratulations of friends, who had begun to feel apprehensions for

his safety. Wearied as he was by the excursion, he entertained the company with a graphic account of his adventures, and after taking some refreshment retired. The next day he attended the dedication of the Church of the Messiah, and taking the boat for Providence the evening of the following day, reached home without further fatigue.

To a superficial observer, this visit may seem but a pleasant break in the monotony of retirement. To Mr. Howland it certainly had that use. Its agreeable connections made it every way gratifying, and he ever cherished it among the pleasant recollections that ministered to the cheerfulness of advancing years. But to the historian or the philosopher, it presents something else than the features of a common-place occurrence. The journey blends with it objects, and suggests thoughts, of instructive interest. It brings before the mind the heroic period of our country's history, and exhibits the picture of a people of indomitable energy, rising to resist oppression—a people, standing forth the unfaltering defenders of a mighty idea, resolving to establish freedom on the western continent, on an immovable basis. And when, after a lapse of more than sixty years, we see an old man bending his steps to a spot made sacred by blood and privation, as if to re-affirm the value of a principle that then and there had governed his action, and that has since “penetrated from the Atlantic to the rocky mountains, and opened a paradise upon the wilds watered by the father of floods,” it presents a spectacle rising to the sublime, and incites us to cling

with all the tenacity of our moral natures, to that law which proclaims liberty as the birthright of the human race.

In the winter of 1841, Mr. Howland received an invitation to deliver an address before the Mechanics' Association of Newport, with which he complied. A violent storm for several preceding days, and the obstruction of Bristol ferry by an accumulation of broken ice, rendered the journey both fatiguing and perilous to a man of eighty-four years; but the obstacles were overcome, and the engagement promptly met. His welcome was cordial and gratifying, but it was an hour of grave retrospection. When, more than three-quarters of a century before, with hopeful spirit and buoyant tread, he departed from home to carve his fortune in another sphere, the family circle was unbroken. Father and mother, six brothers and a sister, were at the threshold to bestow their parting blessing. Now, all except one brother,* fifteen years his senior, were gone. Besides that brother, few among his audience could he greet as childhood companions. They had finished their course and passed on to other scenes, while he survived to speak to their posterity of "events and transactions" which were to "have an influence on all coming time." None better than he understood the significance of the review, or more readily accepted its lesson. His theme was Rhode Island history, and from passages relating to Newport the following are selected:

"For one hundred and fifty years from the arrival of the first settlers here, Newport and Bos-

* Henry Howland. He died in 1843, aged 93 years.

ton were considered the two capital towns of New England, and their commerce rendered each of them superior to New York. Newport early engaged in navigation. Several of the first proprietors of the island were possessed of larger property than those of the Providence colony.—Some of them were from commercial cities in Europe, others were encouraged to emigrate from Massachusetts and settle among them, and they received considerable addition to their number from Providence during the Indian war.

“When that part of Providence, now comprised within the city limits, ceased to be a mere farming district, the first movements in trade and commerce were confined to the purchase of lumber and peltry, and shipping it by the river craft to Newport, in exchange for foreign articles. The natural result of these various circumstances, was the extension of the commerce of Newport to every part not proscribed by the British colonial system.—One circumstance in proof of the ascendancy of Newport and the southern part of the colony, during the first century, is most remarkable. Although the governors of the colony were annually elected, yet, from 1647 to 1748, there were but two governors chosen in the north county, Roger Williams, who served two years, and Joseph Jenckes, who served in that office five years. Thus, during ninety-four years of the one hundred and one, all the governors were of Newport, except the two years when the charter was superseded by Sir Edmond Andros. It does not appear that this was induced

by any local feeling relative to north or south, but to have been as a matter of course, or by common consent. Although it may not in any way affect the public interest in what part of our small territory the governor may reside, yet in modern times, it frequently becomes a subject of debate on the approach of an election.

"Newport, possessed of the best harbor, and the safest to enter at all seasons of the year, of any in the United States, must, since the discovery of steam power, become one of our best manufacturing cities. A good beginning has been made, and other manufactures, beside those of cotton, must and ought to follow.

"It is not so much my intention, in any observation in this address, to assume the office belonging to the historian, as to awaken an interest in the inhabitants of this, my native town, to the subject now brought before them. Others, who will follow in this course, with more intelligence, and a vigor of mind, not pressed down with the weight of years under which I have travelled, will be able to move you with more and better effect. The valuable intelligence and historical memoirs contained in the history of Narragansett, collected and published under the auspices of the Historical Society, by Elisha R. Potter, ought to stimulate some gentleman, resident in this part of the State, to collect materials and commence a history of the county of Newport. Let him also bear in mind what Calender effected an hundred years ago, without material assistance from any of his cotemporaries. The second century discourse, by Mr. Ross, as a continua-

tion of the ecclesiastical history of his own church, also furnishes many materials for a county history. Let us go on, then, till we have a history of every parish, of every town and county, and of the State at large.

“The monuments of our early history are continually perishing, and their loss cannot be restored. Let us now gather up the fragments before they are totally beyond our reach. Within the last two years, the dwelling house erected by the first William Coddington, has been pulled down, and most of the timber which composed a part of that ancient building, has been committed to the flames. The names and the circumstances connected with that ancient vestage of antiquity, ought to have saved it from destruction. We may ask, why did not the State,—why did not the town of Newport purchase this property, and preserve it at least for another century? The answer must be, because the attention of the people generally has not been drawn to the subject of our early history. So thoughtless, so careless have we been, that not one out of twenty of the descendants of the first settlers can tell you where the ashes of their progenitors rest, or repeat the christian names of the four or five generations of them who have passed the time of their probation here. Coddington was one of those devoted Pilgrims who removed with his family and property to this country, to enjoy that political and religious freedom of which church and state had deprived him in his native land; and he was one of that noble company which laid the

right of private judgment and freedom of conscience as the foundation of their little colony, when they first assembled on this island. The Coddington house, as tradition states, was the residence of four generations of that family, and when it passed to others, it was suffered to decay.

“ It was the last house left in Newport, built by any of the original company. It was the house in which George Fox, the patriarch and founder of the denomination of Quakers, resided while he remained in Rhode Island. Coddington being one of his early converts, it is highly probable that those of the same faith and persuasion first and frequently assembled here in solemn worship. A mansion in so many ways connected with, and combining such early associations in the mind of every antiquarian, and which had stood through a succession of an hundred and seventy years, which had witnessed the decay or removal of all the buildings of the age, ought to have been preserved in its ancient form, as a standing witness to other and future generations, of those scenes and circumstances through which their predecessors had passed.

“ When I beheld the massy beams which had composed the strong frame-work of the building lying near the site of the ancient foundation, I could not suppress, but gave utterance to those deep feelings of regret and sorrow, which the view of these ruins so strongly excited. In the whole catalogue of wonders, recorded by Richard Mather, there is none so wonderful as the apathy which has fallen on this generation in relation to the memory of

their ancestors. There are few who consider the divine command, 'honor thy father and thy mother,' as extending further than to their immediate parents, while the graves of their fathers may be trampled on or passed by as only composing a part of the common earth. It is, however, a pleasing exception to this, that the little grave-yard in which six of the first governors of this colony now rest, has been decently enclosed at the expense of the Society of Friends."

A subsequent invitation to deliver a lecture before a Lyceum, at Lowell, Mr. Howland felt obliged to decline, and with these parting words to the citizens of his native town, he terminated his public efforts.

In 1843, the Massachusetts Historical Society celebrated in Boston, the second centennial anniversary of the confederation of the New England colonies. By invitation, Mr. Howland was present. It was an event in which he felt more than ordinary interest, and while history reminded him that the Plantations of Providence "desired in vain to participate in the benefits of the union," and that "the request of the Island of Rhode Island was equally rejected,"* he sympathised with the spirit which prompted the commemoration. He found pleasure in the reflection, that time had obliterated the prejudices upon which that rejection was founded, and that in the struggle and sacrifice for a nationality now "bounded only by the Atlantic and Pacific oceans," Rhode Island stood fraternally side by side with these once exclusive colonies.

*Bancroft, i. 422.

"Although," he says, "the colony of Rhode Island was excluded from the privilege of being a member of that confederation, and was left to defend herself against the Indian tribes within her limits, yet, as old things are passed away, we rejoice that better feelings now exist, and as the union and friendship of all the New England States is essential to their prosperity and happiness, we hope it may increase and be perpetuated."†

The learned discourse of ex-president John Quincy Adams, was marked by the exactness of statement and fullness of detail which affix peculiar value to such productions, and as Mr. Howland followed him closely in his review of the history of the confederated union, "the model and prototype of the North American confederacy of 1774," he felt gratified in hearing many of his cherished and often repeated opinions confirmed, especially that "the Plymouth Pilgrims had no ambition of conquest, and no purpose of injustice to the natives of this hemisphere mingled with their migration for settlement," and that they were "remarkable for having furnished the first example in modern times of a social compact or system of government instituted by voluntary agreement, conformably to the laws of nature, by men of equal rights." If he was edified by the erudition of the orator, he was no less amused by his plausible justification of Massachusetts in banishing Roger Williams, as well as his adroitness in setting forth the "conscientious contentious spirit" which pervaded the New England Colonies, and of which he pronounced Wil-

†Letter to Mass. Hist. Soc. 1843.

liams "the very impersonation"—a declaration balanced by a compliment to his eloquence and power as a preacher, and an acknowledgment that the spirit of charity or toleration on which he founded his government, constituted "his highest title to renown."

For aboriginal names, as applied to localities, Mr. Howland manifested a strong attachment, and against their obliteration, whether in town or country, he uniformly protested. Many of them were more euphonic than their English substitutes, and all of them had a significance which was lost in the change. Besides, changes of this sort, had a tendency to weaken that reverence for the past, which in his opinion, was essential to a true appreciation and wise improvement of the present. It might seem a little thing to such as were not students of cause and effect; but it was nevertheless an evil. It fostered a spirit already too apparent in the community, and which needed a wholesome restraint.

For the safety of the public records, he also expressed a strong solicitude, quickened by the consciousness of their serious exposure, and we find that as early as 1818 the subject was agitated in town meeting. January 14th, of that year, he was associated with Messrs. Thomas P. Ives, and Zachariah Chaffee, on a committee "to inquire into the expediency of erecting a suitable building for the accommodation of the town clerk's and town treasurer's offices, and for the accommodation of the town watch." The committee reported at the

town meeting, April 15th, that they were "fully convinced of the expediency" of providing a building suited to the objects contemplated in their instructions, and that in their judgment "the public records ought to be removed from their present exposed situation as soon as a proper and convenient place could be procured for them." In conformity with these views, they recommended "the erection of a stone fire proof building with a room in the second story," adapted to all town purposes. The report being read, was referred to the next annual town meeting, at which no action was had. The question of location being undecided, the committee were continued with their original powers. Nothing more appears on record until April 19th, 1820, when the committee again reported. They declare that they "are more than ever convinced, that no further delay ought to be made in this business, but that the present situation of the town and probate records should induce the town to provide a more safe and secure place for their deposit." And there, for a time, the subject seems to have rested. But with Mr. Howland it was an ever present thought, and in 1844 he addressed a letter to the mayor and aldermen, calling their attention to the importance of some municipal action, to which he received the following reply :

CITY OF PROVIDENCE, }
Mayor's Office, Aug. 13, 1844. }

My dear Sir :—The communication which you presented to me yesterday, I laid before the board of aldermen, who voted that the same should be placed on their files. Should you desire that it should be published, it will give

me pleasure to furnish a copy, or to take any other measures you may desire. At all times, communications from a citizen so long connected with the municipal governments, shall receive prompt attention.

I remain, very respectfully yours,

THOS. M. BURGESS, Mayor.

JOHN HOWLAND, Esq.

In 1847 was completed the one hundredth year since the re-annexation of the towns of Cumberland, Bristol, Warren, Barrington, Tiverton and Little Compton, to the jurisdiction of Rhode Island. The event was deemed too important in the history of the State to be passed unnoticed. The Rhode Island Historical Society suggested a public commemoration, and by its committee united with committees from the several towns in making the necessary arrangements.

The celebration took place at "Stone Bridge," Tiverton, July 5, and drew together a large concourse from Providence, Warren, Bristol, Newport, and other towns. The day was intensely hot, but did not prevent Mr. Howland and his venerable friend William Wilkinson, then the last, it is believed, of general Ezekiel Cornell's brigade, joining the procession which scaled the embankments of old fort Barton, on the Heights, to listen to an oration from Alfred Bosworth, Esq., of Warren. It was a clear and well written account of the circumstances connected with the event which gave rise to the celebration, together with a brief outline of the early settlement of each of the six towns. The orator was peculiarly happy in his delineations of the scenes and characters belong-

ing to that portion of Rhode Island history, and revived many pleasant reminiscences of Blackstone, Willett, Byfield, and Church, and the sanguinary struggles of King Philip's war.

The spot chosen for the exercises was fitting the occasion; and with suitable protection from the fierce rays of a mid-day sun, would have been the most delightful that could have been selected. From the summit of the rugged eminence, opened a prospect of surpassing beauty, embracing some of the most remarkable scenes of aboriginal and revolutionary history. Turning towards the northwest, the eye rested on Mount Hope, the home and grave of Philip. Near by, the spires of Bristol marked the spot where young Howland first bore arms in the cause of freedom. On the west, stretching from Mount Hope bay to the broad ocean, lay Rhode Island, with its luxuriant fields, flanked by Prudence, Patience, and other insulated localities of lesser note, revealing on the high land nearly in line with "Stone Bridge," the outline of the breastwork over which the continental flag waved in 1778; and following the beautiful east passage to its mingling with the deep sea, memory readily recalled the triumph of Talbut in his "egg shell" craft over the heavy armed and well appointed British galley Pigot.

Patriotic odes, written by William J. Pabodie and Thomas Durfee, Esqs., were sung with impressive effect by several ladies and gentlemen of the Providence Beethoven Society, accompanied by the instruments of the Brass Band. And as the music rose upon the clear and silent air, and

spread its inspiring harmony over "the rolling ocean and storied fields," it stirred anew the fountain of thought, and brought up before every mind "the spirit and the images of other years," when the hoarse voice of war was heard, and the best blood of Rhode Island was freely poured out.

It has been said, that "the most serious things have a ludicrous side," and if the term "serious" be received as a synonyme for earnest rather than sombre thought, the remark is not without application in this connection; at all events, the day at Tiverton was not barren of amusing incidents to enliven its graver aspects.

"A field dinner and Rhode Island clam bake, prepared with express reference to the celebration, and served up in the style derived by our forefathers from the aborigines," was announced to follow the services on the Heights. Gov. Diman had been expected to preside, but in his absence, Hon. Stephen Branch was called to the chair, supported by Messrs. Howland and Wilkinson as vice presidents. Unforeseen delay had robbed the dinner of a portion of its deliciousness, but this was amply compensated by "the feast of reason and flow of soul" that succeeded. Judge Branch, in a brief and enlivening speech, referred appropriately to the event the day celebrated, and welcomed the guests to all the enjoyments of a Rhode Island "peculiar institution." His remarks were received with hearty applause, and gave tone to the hour. Hon. Job Durfee prefaced, in mingled strains of humor and patriotism, a ballad written for the occasion, which, calling up the forms of

the adventurous Northmen, the enterprising Cabots, the recluse Bluxton, the strong-willed Williams, and the friendly Massasoit, told the audience that

“O'er these rude heights in wild career,
Red hunters with the bow,
From steep to steep pursued the deer,
Two hundred years ago.”

And reminding them that

“Soul-liberty, by God ordained
To all the race below,
Her Hope and Anchor here regained
One hundred years ago.”

It was his last appearance in public, and the last address made to an assemblage of his fellow citizens. Three weeks later he had fallen before fatal disease, and Rhode Island was called to mourn the departure of one of her ablest jurists and truest sons.

Hon. William Hunter next rose, and holding up a clam-shell as suggestive of a theme, pronounced an amusing eulogy upon “the treasures of the sea,” adorned with the glowing rhetoric and graceful oratory that in earlier years had charmed the Senate, “setting the table in a roar,” and then turning to other topics of more serious import, gave utterance to thoughts becoming the statesman and diplomatist. Rev. Edward B. Hall, Professor William Gammel, and others, responded happily to calls made upon them; but in the midst of this intellectual banquet, the shrill whistle of the steamer gave warning that the hour of departure had arrived. Unfortunately, however, almost simultaneous with the signal, the fasts were

thrown off, and when a company of fifty or more merged from the orchard, in which they had partaken of their "field dinner," they beheld the boat in the distance, under full head of steam, shaping her course for Providence. Here was a dilemma, unprovided for in the programme of the morning, and which variously affected its victims. Some, having evening engagements, took no pains to conceal their vexation. A few, unburdened with cares, laughed heartily, and pronounced it "a good joke," while others, unable to perceive fun in the thing, yet disposed to make the best of it, kept silence. But what was to be done? To pass the night at a tavern at which no provision for strangers had been made, was not to be thought of. To tax the hospitality of neighboring farm-houses was undesirable, and to reach home that night seemed impossible. From this stand-point the affair assumed a serious aspect, especially when it was remembered that a nonagenarian was of the party; yet it soon became evident, from the cheerfulness of his tone, that sympathy was uncalled for. While deliberating on the course to take, attention was drawn to a small vessel lying near the bridge, and a proposition to charter her for an evening trip to the metropolis, received a general concurrence. A bargain was soon struck with the skipper, and some twenty or thirty went on board. A few, however, of feeble faith, apprehensive that the gentle breeze which then scarcely ruffled the water, might prove treacherous, and leave them befogged at the mercy of the tide, declined to make the voyage. Mr. Howland was of the num-

ber who decided to go, looking upon the adventure as an amusing sequel to the experiences of the day. The sloop was entirely destitute of comforts for even a three hours' excursion, but the company having disposed themselves over her crowded deck as best they could, sail was hoisted and she was soon under way. For the first hour all went well. Under easy sail she crossed the entrance to Mount Hope bay, and doubling Popasquash point, the Tiverton cordillera was lost from sight. A gorgeous sunset, seen no where in higher perfection than on the broad bosom of the Narragansett, now burst upon the view, awakening in the beholder a sense of a divine presence, and exciting wonder that scenes in nature like this should be less attractive to Americans, and less appreciated, than minor national glories in foreign lands.

The merry voyagers, anticipating the speedy greetings of home, were doomed to disappointment. As night spread its dark mantle over them, the wind subsided into a perfect calm, leaving them midway to their "desired haven," to be drifted back by the receding tide. Here was a second dilemma, also unprovided for, to be overcome only by manual dexterity. Buoyant spirits and the diligent use of oars triumphed, and after several hours of unwearied rowing, the party, at one o'clock in the morning, landed at Fox Point, and were soon within the welcome precincts of home, to philosophize, perchance, before they slept, on the uncertainties of a centennial day. But for considerate attentions, the event might have proved serious to the patriarch of the company. An extra

garment, however, timely supplied, sheltered him from the chilling influence of a damp nocturnal atmosphere, and, though somewhat stiffened by a seven hours' confinement to one position, a warm portion, followed by a sound sleep, restored him to his usual vigor. Those who remained behind, and sought a night's repose at Fall River, had no occasion to regret their decision, while those who made the star-lit voyage, will ever retain lively recollections of a more agreeable extempore water party than often falls to the lot of mortals to enjoy.

The next month, August 24th, Mr. Howland visited Newport, to attend the centennial celebration of the founding of the Redwood Library. The celebration took place in the Unitarian church. Rev. Charles T. Brooks recited an ingenious and appropriate poem, celebrating the scenery and the ancient settlers of Aquidneck, together with the founding of the library, and some of the leading minds who had been nursed amidst its treasures. Mr. Brooks was followed by Hon. William Hunter, who delivered an elaborate address, abounding in valuable information respecting the men, the manners, the modes of life, and the social and commercial enterprises of Newport in early times, and adorned with passages of eloquence, and episodes of general history, which indicated how rich and fertile was the mind of the venerable orator. It was his last public performance. He died after a brief illness, December 3, 1849, having been for thirty-five years identified with much of the political history of his State and of the country. He

was distinguished alike for the variety and elegance of his attainments, and for "that grace and courtliness of manner, which, beyond all the men of his time, he was admitted to possess."

Mr. Howland remained in Newport until the next day, receiving the attentions of friends, and revisiting the localities familiar to childhood. The "old stone mill," around which he had so often sported, and whose history he had so carefully studied—the grave-yard where reposed the remains of venerated parents and cherished friends—the ancient dwellings, once the homes of many early companions—the rugged cliffs on which he had often stood listening to the voice of the sea—and the court house green, the scene of exciting juvenile pastimes,—all, had peculiar charms for him, reviving as they did, sunny memories of "days lang syne," shaded, indeed, by the thought, that this pilgrimage to his natal home might prove his last. It was his last.

CHAPTER XIII.

In the preceding chapters, many traits prominent in the character of Mr. Howland, have been incidentally brought to view. In completing the portraiture, besides his fragmentary writings, which are among the best revelations of the man, free use will be made of the impressions and opinions of those who had known him intimately, and whose diverse political and theological relations are the guaranties of impartiality.

Mr. Howland was fond of children, and his rare faculty of interesting them, always ensured a repetition of their visits. It pleased him to listen to the prattle of the "beginners to talk," and to answer the questions of older ones. He loved to sound the depths of youthful thought, and to aid the development of latent ideas. His theory was, that no opportunity for sowing the seeds of virtue and knowledge should pass unimproved; and thus he was constantly leaving impressions of his own mind upon the young. "I remember Mr. Howland for more than half a century," writes a distinguished clergyman. "I was a constant visitor at his place of business, where he would al-

ways entertain us with something interesting touching the past. From the interest he took in us boys of some six and fifteen years of age, I was accustomed to visit him frequently until his death." Hints on manners and morals were seasonably dropped, and all historic propensities encouraged. A letter of inquiry from a member of his family, concerning the western mounds and the races that at a remote period inhabited that vast region, received a prompt reply of eight closely written pages, showing a thorough acquaintance with the various opinions on these subjects that had at different times prevailed. Another note, asking some account of the "dark day," drew from him the following recollection: "In the forenoon, say nine o'clock, I was reading Voltaire's life of Charles XII., of Sweden. Near the close of the volume, I found it grew dark, but supposed it to be nothing more than a thickening up of the clouds. But the darkness increased, and having arrived at the last page, I threw some shavings on the fire, and by the light finished it. I then went into the street, where many persons were assembled, apparently in astonishment at the darkness, among others Dr. Manning. A powerful man, but profligate, advanced up to the president, and said, 'how do you account for this darkness, sir? What does it mean?' The president, with great solemnity of manner, replied, 'I consider it, sir, as a prelude to that great and important day, when the final consummation of all things is to take place.'

"The darkness appeared as if something palpa-

ble was mixed with the air, and everything assumed the color of dry oak leaves. At noon, I observed candles lighted in the neighboring houses, when I went home to dinner. Though we had fine roast veal and asparagus, none of the large family had appetite to partake of them but myself. In the evening, the blackest darkness was so palpable, that a candle at the window gave no light outside. I placed a candle at the window, and went out to observe the effect. The alley was but twenty feet wide, yet the large building on the opposite side could not be discerned. The light did not appear to penetrate more than half a yard from the window."

On another occasion, in reply to a request for his opinion, he wrote at considerable length on the origin of the races, a subject upon which he had expended much thought and research. Familiar with the views of Oken, and the philosophers of his school, he rejected their theories, and accepted, without qualification, the common interpretation of the Mosaic account. The manuscript of this essay, in common with others, perished in the flames.

A letter to a grandson, absent from home, will illustrate his easy adoption of childhood style in composition, and his method of exciting curiosity concerning the past:

TO MASTER JOHN H. EVERETT, SOUTH KINGSTOWN.
PROVIDENCE, Friday, Aug. 3, 1832.

My good boy:—Hearing that Capt. Townsend is bound to Kingstown, I will not let the opportunity slip without writing to you. We often think and talk about you, and

wish for some of your good brown-bread and milk. In this you farmers have an advantage which we in Providence, where the roads are covered with paving stones, do not possess.

If you should live to be half as old as your grandfather now is, you will have that to boast of which he never had ; that is, you have been to the Royal Seat of the Narragansett Kings, the place of residence of two of the greatest men of the age in which they lived,—*Canonicus* and *Miantonomo*. You will see in the history of the Indian wars, and other old writings, that I have spelt the name of the last a little different from some of them. They commonly write the last syllable *my* instead of *mo* ; but I have written it *Miantinomo* because the old men, when I was a boy, used to pronounce it so. These two Kings or Sachems, as they were called, owned all the land from Pawcatuck river and Point Judith to Pawtucket river and the north end of Smithfield ; and Roger Williams bought the whole town of Providence of them. If you have a wish to know anything particular about it, you can ask or inquire (with as much politeness as you are master of,) of Mr. Potter, who is an instructor in the Academy, to show you and the rest of the boys the place where the great wigwam of Miantonomo stood.

When will your vacation commence ? I shall like to see you, and so will grandma and Janetta. I saw your last letter to your mother, and am much pleased to see that your hand-writing has improved. Go on, and still make further improvements. You have advantages which I never had at your age. Have a disposition to thank God for all the blessings you possess, and which are all owing to his bounty and goodness.

Present your grandfather's respects to Mr. Comstock. Though I never saw him, I honor him and his office, as an instructor of the rising generation. You will see by this paper that my hand-writing fails by age, and if I have

spelled any word wrong, I hope you have information enough to find it out, and tell how it ought to be written.

Be a good boy. Mind your lessons. Don't let idleness prevent attention to your books. Confiding you to the care of that Being who has preserved me through many dangers, and through many years,

I pledge you affection and regard.

JOHN HOWLAND.

The exalted opinion here expressed of Canonical and Miantonomi, was also extended to Philip, of Mount Hope, of whom he always spoke as a man of remarkable natural endowments, and deserving to be held in respect for virtues that would have been honorable to civilized life. He saw in him a monarch and warrior, nobly but unsuccessfully, struggling for the integrity of his domain and the rights of his people. He did not hold Philip solely responsible for the devastations which signalized the war bearing his name. He believed that, had the pacific policy of Williams been uniformly adhered to by all the New England colonies, the scheme for exterminating the whole race of English settlers would never have been formed; and recurrence to the sanguinary battle which terminated in Philip's death, always awakened emotions of sadness. "The character of Philip," he says, "and the cause in which he contended, are viewed in a different light at this time from what they were by those who suffered in the war which desolated so many of their settlements; and although it does not accord with my views or feelings to render honor to any man for possessing a warlike spirit, or for his military attainments, yet

I would hope that the present generation may not pass away, before a monument shall be erected to the memory of King Philip, by the government of Rhode Island, on the very spot where he surrendered his country with his life, by the stroke of one of his traitorous subjects."

In reference to the Indian tribes he writes: "A wrong impression seems to have been received by many not fully conversant with the early history of New England, viz: that most if not all the native Indians were exterminated or driven off to the western tribes in the war of 1675-76; whereas a great number of them never joined the hostile tribes, and many others who did not remain neutral, joined the whites, and fought on their side against their countrymen. The Seconet tribe were generally allies of colonel Church in opposition to Philip. Many of them continued to live in their own wigwams, and others were hired, and lived in the families of their white neighbors. There was a populous village of them near Mashapaug pond. This village had in the first grant of land by Miantinomo to Roger Williams, formed the western boundary of the Providence territory.

"The venerable Arthur Fenner, the grandfather of governor James Fenner, was born in Cranston, in the year 1699, twenty-three years after the close of Philip's war, and he has informed me that when a young man, on travelling the road from his father's house to town, it was usual to meet or pass more Indians than white people on the way. But where, now, are the villages, the warriors and the youth,

the sachems, the tribes and their families? They have perished. Their graves are among us, and the plow passes over them."

Mr. Howland was a cheerful man, and his vivacity seldom forsook him. He had a grave way of relating amusing incidents, that provoked in the listener a hearty laugh. He indulged occasionally in a harmless joke, under cover of which he sometimes conveyed a seasonable reproof. This trait showed itself in early life. When a young man, walking down the street one evening, he perceived two persons approaching on the opposite side, one of whom was evidently under the excitement of intoxication. As they came nearer, he found that the victim of the wine-cup held the post of secretary in a responsible position, and he resolved on sobering him by a sudden start. Secreting himself in the shadow of the wall, he exclaimed in sepulchral tones, "The secretary stood alone. Modern degeneracy had not reached him." The party paused, as though addressed by a supernatural voice. For a few moments all was silent, but failing to discover the source from whence the voice came, they proceeded home, while young Howland pursued his way, greatly amused with the sensation he had produced. The words were not forgotten, nor the thought they expressed, and probably Curran's defence of England's great secretary was never before so effectively quoted—never, certainly, in behalf of temperance.

From the adoption of the constitution until near the close of his life, Mr. Howland was a frequent

contributor to the press. These communications were varied in their tone and objects; sometimes good naturedly satirizing the follies of the times, at others in obituary form, recording the worth of a valued citizen or a cherished friend, who had passed from earth; and at still others, gravely and earnestly discussing the political, educational and moral interests of the community. His earliest published production, was the following brief and amusing communication, written immediately after the adoption of the constitution, and having reference to that event. It was the fruitful germ of contributions to patriotic sentiment, sound morality, and enlightened christian thought, spreading over a period of more than half a century.

[For the Gazette.]

“ MR. CARTER :

Last Saturday evening, as some boys were in a small boat fishing, near Totawomscot rocks, at the mouth of Pawtucket river, a fine plump SALMON, weighing exactly *thirteen* pounds, leaped from the river into the boat. As the circumstance was rather uncommon for a fish, of its own accord, to spring from its native element into a boat, on the boys' return it occasioned some conversation in the neighborhood. But what were the sensations that were excited the next day, when the news of the adoption of the constitution arrived, and on comparing the time, it appeared that the very time that the salmon leaped into the boat was the moment that the president announced to the convention at Newport, that by their votes they had ratified the constitution !

“ Could these circumstances have happened in the days of Augustus Cæsar, they would have been written in golden letters, and enrolled in the capitol. I, sir, have

been an anti since the constitution first appeared, because I have been *told* that it would endanger the liberties and prosperity of our children. But when I find an invisible agency condescending almost to work miracles in contradiction of this opinion, 'I give it to the winds.' I am converted. I am no longer anti. From this day I will support the new government by every proper means, with all my faculties. PETER."

June 1, 1790.

In his commemorative discourse before the Rhode Island Historical Society, several times quoted in these pages, Rev. Dr. Hall thus speaks of Mr. Howland: "He was not a lover of eulogy, and we will not affront the simplicity and sincerity of his image, visible to us still, and peculiarly *here*. All that was in him was open as the day. Down-right honesty was written on his whole frame. In its dealing with others, this honesty passed often into bluntness, and some persons it may have troubled, possibly offended, for a moment—but beneath its roughest show, there dwelt the kindness of a woman's heart. He had great power of expression, and he never feared to use it. He had an inexhaustible fund of humor, and he loved to indulge it, and to see others enjoy it. Never censorious, or willingly unjust, he was perfectly frank, and said what he thought in the way most natural to him. Taking his opinions from no one, he asked no one's leave to keep them. But he respected the opinions of others, and thought more of character than of complexion. There were leaders and politicians who found no favor with him, and would not have felt flattered if they had heard him speak

of them—as they certainly would, if they went near enough. But he was never indiscriminate or implacable. He once said, having in view an old partizan and opponent—‘If a man has been wrong for seventy years, and then for five years does right, he ought to be forgiven.’

“In his own political creed, Mr. Howland lived and died in the school of Washington and Hamilton—than which none purer, none nobler in power or patriotism, can we expect to see! But the hope of political distinction was never his infirmity. He aimed only to be useful. And here is the lesson of his life; a great lesson, for young and old.”

He was fond of recurring to the spirit and conduct of those who set the ball of freedom in motion. He was proud of the fact, that the first recommendation of a Congress in 1774, was a vote of the town of Providence, instructing their delegates in the Assembly to bring forward such a measure. The declaration of independence, as the calm expression of an intelligent, patriotic and oppressed people, he held to be among the most sacred of our political legacies. In his judgment, it embodied the vital principles of personal security under the rule of law. The “self-evident” truth that “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,” were the inalienable right of every human being, he received without reservation, as it had been received by the noble band who pledged their “lives, fortunes and sacred honor,” in its defence. No other interpretation had been suggested, in the Continental Congress, while under discussion. No other had been thought of, and no other less broad

and explicit would have been tolerated by the sons of freedom, north or south. He stood where they stood—where Washington, Hancock, Jefferson, Adams, and Patrick Henry stood. Other instruments were subject to mutation. Time might require a modification of their statements. In the progress of the nation, the Constitution might need revision and amendment. But here was set forth, not a “sounding, glittering generality,” but fundamental principles, hallowed by an eternal sanction, and applicable to all people, in all climes, and in all ages.

One who had frequently conversed with him, says, “Mr. Howland had an easy flow of language, and his powers of description have rarely been excelled. The anecdote and reminiscence with which his conversation was interwoven, imparted to it a peculiar attraction. His close observation of men had given him an understanding of traits that best illustrate character, and as I recall the hours in which I listened to him, and gathered up facts of history that books had not yet revealed, the persons and scenes described come up to view as present realities. He was what some would call a ‘set man,’ but this trait was rather the result of his ideas of order and right, than the offshoot of a spirit of domination. His memory was a complete encyclopædia of American history, and a record of all he saw and knew of the leading men of his times, and the transactions in which they figured, would have been an invaluable contribution to that department of literature.

"One or two incidents I recollect, which may serve to illustrate some of his mental peculiarities. Speaking of the common form of salutation, he observed, 'People ask, how is your health, or how are you, to-day?' But I do not like either form of the question. If to be answered literally, it is not a good one to put to an old man like me. It is not pleasant to enter into a history of my daily aches and pains. If it is used as a courtesy, the French have a much better salutation, 'bon jour.' Sometimes he would start the question of the comparative longevity of ancient and modern times. Do men live to a more advanced age now than they did in remote ages? David, he said, assigned three score years and ten as the days of man in his time. Extension of life beyond that period appeared to have been from extraordinary causes.—He had no statistics with which to determine the question—all was conjecture—but his impression was, that the average duration of life now, exceeded its average duration in the middle period of the Mosaic dispensation. 'He was,' writes an accomplished scholar, familiar with his idiosyncrasy, 'a man not of a thousand, but of a million.' In fact, I never knew his like, in some respects. He was of the legitimate puritan stock by but few removes, and a good specimen of the old Northman race, from which the puritans had their best strength.—He was fond of studying the history of the Northmen, and had won no small honors as a student of Scandinavian antiquities. Well might he search diligently into the early history of his own fathers, and honor the heroism of the sea kings whose

blood flowed in his veins. He was Northman, or Teuton, or Saxon, in his whole nature, unmingled with French or Italian blood. He was plain spoken, resolute, humane, reverential. On one subject he had made up his mind long ago, viz., that God had given him a conscience of his own, too sacred to be trodden upon by priest or despot, and that the civil and religious liberty meant for him, was too good a gift not to be shared with all reasonable men."

In reviewing the eighty-four years of Mr. Howland's residence in Providence, we are surprised, not only at the activity of a life seemingly so quiet, and the intimate connexion in which he is found with the prominent events of the times, but at the vast amount of literary labor performed for others. His letters to Mr. Knowles show the extent to which he was ever ready to serve those who were endeavoring to rescue the fading facts of history from oblivion; and the wonder of all must be, that amid so many responsibilities, he could do so much. But this may be explained by two words, diligence and promptness. He never procrastinated. The work of the present hour was done in its own time, and with continuity. The fragments of time, wasted by many, were by him busily employed; and thus nothing accumulated on his hands to harass and fatigue. Method overcame all hindrances to the preparation of his free will offerings, and never a correspondent, however minute his inquiries, had reason to complain of a tardy reply, or of total neglect.

We now come to speak of Mr. Howland's religious views and character. He has described on page 29, the cause which induced him to leave the place of worship first chosen on his arrival in Providence, and in his letter to Mr. Knowles, page 243, is assigned a reason why he never returned to the communion in which he was mainly educated. For eighty years he worshipped with the First Congregational Society, to which the incident of the chestnuts directed him, and for upwards of twenty years discharged the duties of clerk and secretary to the society, and its benevolent association. In 1814, he united with the church, and was subsequently chosen to the office of deacon, in which capacity he served until 1847, when he tendered his resignation in the following note to his pastor:

“DEAR SIR:—This day, October 31, 1847, I have arrived at the age of ninety years; and knowing the infirmities attending my advanced years, I desire to relinquish the duties confided to me by the church. The decay of my faculties, especially of my memory and hearing, admonish me that it is my duty thus to determine. . . . My attachment to the church has not abated by age. I pray for the increase of its members, and for their future prosperity, which I hope its great and glorious Head will grant. I acknowledge with gratitude the mercy and protection which it has pleased God (the author of my being,) to grant me through a long life; and am now awaiting its close with calmness and resignation, in the humble and somewhat confident hope of entering on a better state of existence, through his infinite grace.

JOHN HOWLAND.

Unwilling to sever an official relation so long and worthily maintained, the church declined receiving his resignation, and voted to release him from further responsible service.

Mr. Howland was a christian, not simply by inheritance, nor from impulse, but from calm and deep conviction. Parental instruction and influence had indeed a share in inspiring reverence for God, and respect for the institutions of religion.— But his faith stood on an independent foundation. It was the fruit of investigation. Reason and judgment acknowledged the supernatural authority of the Holy Scriptures. At one time, we are told, that “partly in consequence of what he saw and felt during the war, and partly from religious dissensions, he became perplexed and sceptical, and spent his Sabbaths at home reading—not as do many, to confirm his doubts, but to dispel them.— After going carefully through Mosheim’s Ecclesiastical History, and listening to Dr. Hitchcock’s first discourses on the Evidences of Religion, he became a settled believer and happy christian.”

But, though his doubts were thus happily dispelled, others of a doctrinal character sprung up, which for a time disturbed him. The principal of these related to the three-fold character of God, or the supreme deity of Christ. He was unable to reconcile the views taught in the Westminster Confession, or the Athenasian and Nicene Creeds, with what seemed to him the clear and unqualified language of the Saviour, and after a careful examination of the scriptures he became satisfied that the passages usually cited in support of the trinity

were not valid. In this view he was confirmed by the perusal of Price's sermons, and ever after held without distrust the doctrine of the unity of God.

The views upon which he thus settled down, were to him sources of continual enjoyment, unfolding, as he believed they did, the true relation of Christ to the Universe. "I think," he says, in a letter to a friend, "that my belief of the divine unity ascribes higher honor and glory to the Saviour than that of trinitarians. They say there are three persons in the Godhead, and Christ is only one of the three. I believe that God by his Spirit dwelt in him. Luke, chapter 4th, says expressly, "Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan, and was led by the spirit into the wilderness." This text trinitarians seldom or never quote, because, he being one of the three persons, this text by affirming that he was filled with the Holy Ghost, who with them is a distinct person, makes his divine essence consist of two persons, which destroys their doctrine. But the scripture doctrine is, "the spirit was given to him without measure, and in him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead."

With the religious controversies that sprung up early in the present century, and with those which have prevailed among the various sects since, Mr. Howland was thoroughly conversant. To friendly discussion he was not averse; the free expression of opinion he approved; but controversy, as such, he did not love. The asperity with which controversies were sometimes conducted, occasioned him

profound regret. Christians of every name, he thought, could have but a single aim,—the advancement of truth and righteousness,—and it seemed to him that what many called contending for “the faith once delivered to the saints,” was too often a contention for dogmas or opinions of no practical importance to every-day life, and unessential to future salvation. He felt that the condition of the world demanded the united, harmonious action of the several christian denominations, and that whatever tended to divide and distract, was an evil to be condemned. “I am sick,” he says, “of this kind of contest. Disputes and contentions among christians are always injurious to religion.” Writing to a friend, in 1831, in reference to a controversy then pending, he says: “It is deeply to be regretted, that religious disputes have always been carried on with more acrimony and bitterness, than differences of opinion on any other subject. Men can write on any other subject, and dispute each other’s propositions, and treat their opponents like gentlemen, but let the same persons write or dispute on religious subjects, and they throw off the cloak of the gentleman, as the catholic parson did his gown when he entered the arena, and said, “lay there, religion, till I flog this fellow.” I do not hold to the doctrine of total depravity, but have often thought that this propensity among professors of religion, to be one of the strongest arguments in favor of that doctrine. Roger Williams, in one of his letters, says it was a saying among his neighbors, that “we should be quiet and peaceable

enough if it was not for the quarrels and contentions among these holy brethren;" and Pope, under a sense of this propensity, in one of his hymns, says :

"Let not this weak, unknowing hand,
Presume thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land,
On all I judge thy foe."

This spirit is not confined to books and pamphlets, but is frequently exhibited in sermons."

In this connexion, it may be interesting, as a contribution to the theological history of the country from 1766 to 1812, to quote another extract from the same letter, in reference to the discussion carried on in "The Panoplist," which had charged certain clergymen of Boston with having designedly concealed their sentiments. He writes :

" 'The exhibition of the Unitarianism of Boston in 1812,' which came in the envelope, I had read when it first came out; and more than a year past, a friend, who probably thought it of some importance, enclosed it to me from a distant part of the United States. Although I am habitually of a grave countenance, it makes me smile, as I remember what the elder Nicholas Brown used to say, that 'when great men miss it, they miss it a great deal.' The charge is, that the clergy of Boston agreed to conceal their sentiments respecting the trinity. I do not believe they ever agreed to any such thing, and there is no account that they ever had a meeting for that purpose. It appears by Mr. Parkman's letter, that they at that

time, did not know each other's sentiments on that question. They preached the gospel as they found it in the bible. Congregations, after their first establishment, commonly imbibe the sentiments and doctrines of their ministers; and as the ministers, from the days of Dr. Mayhew, had one after another ceased to preach calvinism, the people ceased to hold those doctrines, till, in 1812, it appears that a large majority of the people and clergy, without scarcely knowing that their sentiments were different from what their grandfathers had held, found themselves to be anti-calvinists. As to the accusation of their being guilty of not preaching the doctrine of the trinity, it is doubtless true. But the same charge is true of all the orthodox clergy in this country, and without any design of concealment in either. I am now seventy-three years of age, and was brought up and attended worship with my orthodox parents, and except when repeating the Assembly's catechism on Sunday evenings, never heard of there being three persons in the Godhead. I have heard Whitfield and Bellamy, and Dr. Stiles, and Buell, and Vinall, and Dr. Samuel Hopkins, and President Manning, and Dr. Stillman, and President Dwight, and many others of the old school, of greater or lesser note, yet I do not recollect hearing a sermon from any or either of them in favor of the trinity, although they were all strictly orthodox. The truth is, it was an article of faith written in creeds or printed in catechisms, and there it rested. At the end of a prayer, it was usual to make it a sort of doxology. It was not the custom in any of the churches

as it is at present, for the congregation to rise and hear the doxology sung, at the close of service. This is a modern custom. The subject of the trinity was not debated or discussed, till a periodical in Boston called the Panoplist, charged the Boston clergy with denying or not preaching it. The orthodox before that time, were as silent as the others. They both preached what they honestly thought the scriptures taught, and the orthodox are as justly chargeable with concealment as the unitarians. The doctrine was considered a *mystery*, and the majority of each congregation could neither be said to believe or deny it, till it was brought into discussion, and then, on examining the bible, the belief of unitarianism became the necessary result. When the discussion reached this town, several old members of the First Congregational Church asked, 'what is this question? Is it any new doctrine?' They were answered, that the question was, whether Christ was God or the Son of God. They replied with some degree of surprise, 'can that be a question? I always believed he was the Son of God and not God himself. That can be no new doctrine.' And they found that they had always been unitarians, though from being unacquainted with the term, they had not known it; and this is now the case with thousands."

Sadness often shadowed his path in the removal of those he so loved of his immediate household, and of others bound to him by kindred ties, who were scarcely less dear. But these repeated sorrows were borne in the spirit of christian submission.

He considered all the discipline of God as a ministration of mercy. He had faith that all would issue in good; and in bereavements of the young, he derived consolation from the "sure word of promise" concerning them. "Such treasures," he writes, "are not given but lent, to be reclaimed at the will of Him who lends them, and who has the right to dispose of them and of us as to him seemeth best. When infants are removed, like young trees, it is only that they may be planted in a better soil, where they will increase in knowledge and wisdom in company with the redeemed, and are saved from the cares, the troubles, and the afflictions incident to those who have a longer duration on earth. God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways. But we shall know more hereafter, and be fully satisfied with the wisdom and goodness of the divine government."

In a letter to parents who had been bereaved of a lovely child, he says: "What words shall we adopt, when our feelings and sentiments cannot be conveyed or expressed in written language? I have often heard the conduct and language of David spoken of in funeral sermons, with commendation. His views, which were formed under the old covenant, which did not in any express way declare a future state of existence, seems in several of his Psalms to have been frequently changed on this great subject. But on the death of a beloved child, his ardent affection, united with the feeble light he enjoyed, produced the result of a strong

and confiding faith, in which he uttered the memorable declaration, "*I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.*"

"As David, in different seasons of his life, was endowed with a spirit of prophecy, this solemn declaration has, I believe, generally been held by commentators to have been produced by the light of inspiration, afforded to him, not only for his own comfort, but as a testimony of the truth to all others to whom this history should be transmitted. The power and truth of this most interesting sentiment is confirmed, in the teachings of our Saviour, and fully coincides with the best feelings and views of every pious parent.

"'Tis said that nearly half the human race die under the age of ten years, and even Dr. Beecher, in contradiction of the old calvinistic doctrine, admits that all these millions of spiritual beings will compose part of that blessed innumerable host, which shall appear before the throne of God. We have observed in many instances, that those who appear the most desirable and precious on earth, are the soonest removed to a higher state of existence; and Dr. Tappan, in his funeral discourse on the death of Dr. Hitchcock, seems to favor the idea that the divine wisdom deems proper to select from the inhabitants of the earth, in the prime of their days, those most proper to compose the society above, before the feebleness of age and decrepitude have abated their powers of enjoyment and usefulness. Under the sudden loss and bereavement of such a most desirable child as we

now lament, consolation amidst the depth of sorrow seems hardly admissible; but time and our sense of duty will soften and qualify the pungency of grief, as we have other duties to claim our attention, and which must not be forgotten."

The Sabbath was held sacred by Mr. Howland in the highest definition of that term. Physically considered, he deemed it a blessing to man. The wastes of the body are not wholly restored by the repose of the night. It needs a certain amount of additional time thrown in by way of compensation. One tenth is too much, and one fifth too little. One seventh has been proved by the experience of ages, to be the exact amount nature requires; and in appointing one day in seven for rest, God has evinced a paternal regard for the physical welfare of his offspring. But the Sabbath is designed for higher uses than the rest of the body. It has a spiritual significance. It brings rest to the soul. It makes a break in the current of daily thought, and from the cares and anxieties of worldly pursuits, turns the mind for refreshing and uplifting influences to holy communion with its heavenly Father. And hence, in this provision for the entire nature of man, God has sealed the institution of the Sabbath with supernatural authority. So he reasoned; and the command "to keep it holy," he accepted as a binding law.

With the Sabbath he inseparably associated the Sanctuary. Public worship was to him both a duty and a delight. As often as the "church going bell" sounded the call to prayer and praise, he could

adopt with his whole heart the words of the Psalmist, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord." And as advancing age admonished him that his time for waiting at the altar was short, he could with equal fervency say, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." He was glad to be there for his own improvement, and by his presence to bear testimony to the importance of the service in its relation to personal virtue and public order. And there, says his pastor, "we witnessed his devotion to God, his faith in Christ, and his conviction of the dependence of men and nations on the institutions of religion, and the temper of loyalty to the king of kings." The diffusion of "the light and truths of the gospel among those who have hitherto paid little attention to what concerns their highest interests," and the education of a "devoted and learned ministry" for the church, he held to be sacred obligations, and on suitable occasions gave to these objects his hearty support.

His views of the duty and obligation of a christian profession, and the nature and use of the Lord's Supper, are very clearly expressed in the following letters, written to a member of his family in 1816.

PROVIDENCE, 1816.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER :

Under a weighty impression of duty, and influenced by pure affection, I am induced to address my thoughts to you

on a subject of all others the most interesting, and under present circumstances, I think most important. The duty and obligation of making a public profession of religion, is at all times imperious and commanding to those who admit the truth of the great articles of the christian faith. But there are times and seasons in which this duty seems more forcibly brought home to the mind, and when the danger of resisting or avoiding the solemn impressions must be greatly increased. Agreeably to the principles and views of the congregational churches, those who have been baptized in infancy are considered as connected in a near relation to the church in which they are initiated, or in case of removal to a different place, the connection commences with or is transferred to the church with which their parents became connected. This connection implies a duty in them in the course of their youthful days, under the direction of their parents and of the pastor and church, to walk and conduct worthy of their high privileges, and to be so instructed in the nature and principles of the christian faith, as that when arrived at mature age they may voluntarily present themselves before the table of the Lord, and render obedience to the divine command in partaking of that ordinance which he hath established, as a public acknowledgment of their faith in him, as well as for a sign of fellowship with his church, and as a memorial of his infinite love and condescension in giving his life a ransom for those who believe in and obey him. I will not say I have performed the part of duty incumbent on me as I ought to have done. I am conscious of many failings in this as well as in other branches of duty, which I pray Him who is the judge of all our actions as well as of our motives, to forgive for Christ's sake. It has ever been my desire and hope, that my children, on arriving at mature age, would see their duty, and feel disposed to make a public profession of faith, agreeable to the views and requirements of our churches as aforementioned. This

hope, attended by a degree of solicitude, was the more ardently felt from a firm conviction that the faith and order of our congregational churches was the nearest to that of the primitive churches, as founded by the Apostles and their immediate successors. Having read many years ago a considerable portion of ecclesiastical history, and attended to the examination of this subject, I am not a congregationalist merely by descent, but from examination and a full conviction of my understanding. A principal reason that so many neglect their duty, and are disobedient to the command of Christ, "*do this in remembrance of me,*" arises from a wrong apprehension of the nature of the ordinance. They suppose that it is necessary to attain to a state of sanctification before they partake; whereas the observance of this institution is a means to attain to this state of sanctification. The ultimate design of all religious institutions and observances is to perfect us in holiness, and the perfection of holiness is love to God and love to our neighbor; and every time we partake of the memorials of that love which Christ exhibited in submitting to the death of the cross for our sakes, the natural and obvious tendency is to increase our love to God, who sent his son into the world, and our love to our Saviour, for submitting to death and offering himself a sacrifice for us. It is therefore obvious, that as the means must in all cases go before the end, there ought to be no plea of unworthiness made by those who believe in Christ, and hope for salvation through his merits; at least this excuse should not so far operate as to prevent them from complying with his positive command. In the exercise of this disposition to render obedience, we have the approbation of our own conscience, and have reason to expect the influence of the Holy Spirit to purify us more and more from sin, and to render us more conformed to the divine nature and assimilated to the holy and divine character of our blessed Redeemer.

The reason that I have never brought this subject di-

rectly to your view, or urged you to a compliance with this duty, is principally this : that I always wished your decision to rise spontaneously from your own sense of duty, and from the dictates of your own heart, guided by that portion of divine light which God never withholds from those who seek his face and ask counsel of him. I did not desire that you should be influenced by my advice, merely because it was the advice of a parent, or that your deference for my opinion should induce you to proceed without the full and clear assent of your own understanding. These reasons still operate ; but as I am convinced that you now view a compliance with this duty in a more serious light than perhaps you ever did before ; that you feel it to be a duty to comply, but natural timidity, or fear of ostentation, or the censure of some harsh and unfeeling acquaintance, alone prevents you, I think I ought no longer to hesitate or remain silent ; and feeling it a duty I owe a daughter whose happiness is interwoven with all the purest affections of my heart, I have placed this view of the subject before you, and on your rational and candid consideration of the same I have the fullest reliance.

There is one consideration which ought to have great weight with those who know their duty, but who are deterred from the performance of it, by that kind of pride which makes them ashamed to acknowledge themselves the disciples of Christ, in a public profession of faith and in baptism. And that is, the declaration of our Saviour himself, " Whosoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of the Father with the holy angels." Although this may not be applicable to you, yet the blessings implied in this declaration to those who are not ashamed of his name, ought to encourage and strengthen the weak hearted ; for thanks be to God, that his laws partake not of the nature of human institutions, which only punish the guilty without rewarding the obedient, but every judgment

threatened to the disobedient in the gospel, carries with it a promise of blessing to those who believe and obey. The unusual attention which is at this time paid to religion, ought not to be thought lightly of. Every thing is under the government of God, and he will order every thing to result in his own glory, and however the mind may be drawn to think on the great interest of salvation, whoever seeks him with a sincere and honest mind, will find the influences of the Holy Spirit operating in the heart. He who causeth even the wrath of man to praise him, can make the errors and weaknesses of his frail and fallible creatures to speak to the promotion of truth and to the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom. Quench not the spirit which is operating and influencing your mind, but be obedient to its divine instructions, and it will lead you into all necessary truth, and result in your everlasting salvation. And may God so manifest his love and grace to you and yours, that you may both glorify him on earth, and finally enjoy his presence and partake of his glory in heaven. And this prayer offered with fervency to the throne of grace, bears with it the warm affections of my heart and tender love to my children.

JOHN HOWLAND.

PROVIDENCE, 1816.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER :

My mind having been so much taken up since I received your letter, by what devolved on me relating to the annual meeting of the association, that a reply has been delayed. Not wishing to write to you on the subject of my last address, while my mind was confused by a mixture of these extraneous matters, I do not altogether regret this delay, as I hope the time given you thereby for revolving the subject more fully in your thoughts, may have brought you to a more settled state of contemplation, and ripened your views on these questions of doubt with which you appeared in some degree clouded. Your hesitation,

doubts, and fears, are not out of the usual course. I feel all your situation, my dear, for I have experienced it all. I was a long time halting between two opinions, not as was the case with the worshippers of Baal, in the days of Elijah, whether the Lord be God, and whether it was my duty to serve him, but how I could serve him most acceptably. At length I concluded to render obedience to what I conceived to be a divine command, and as far as I was able to be found in the way of my duty, leaving the rest to divine counsel, direction, and sovereignty, which I know is always tempered with mercy and abounding grace. To change the heart belongs only to Him who at first brought light out of darkness, and this with pious resignation and hope we are to leave in his hands. He does all things well. He does not require of us what he knows we are not able to perform. But still he condescends to make use of secondary causes and means, through which he operates in bestowing his grace, and it is in the sincere use of these means, and in reference to the faithful performance of our duty, that he says, in the language of the prophet, "make you a new heart." I do not now recollect what commentators say of Jacob's vision of the ladder, but I think it obviously conveys this sentiment, that God was able to communicate himself to men without this vehicle, yet the intercourse between heaven and earth by the angels descending thereon, shows that the prayers and aspirations of the soul ascending to heaven are the medium, or ladder, if you please, on which the ministering angels, as his messengers, on his spirit of grace descends, and by sanctifying influences possesses the soul in purity and peace. When the troubled and afflicted patriarch had this revelation, he immediately set about the performance of his duty, and in a voluntary act of homage erected a consecrated pillar, as we would build a place of worship, and the name of Bethel has ever since been consecrated in the Jewish and in the Christian Church. Now that we are in

contemplation of an old testament revelation, I will direct your mind to a transaction, which, although I do not recollect ever to have heard it distinctly spoken of, appears to confirm the idea just mentioned. After the angel of God had delivered his message to Manoah, and the venerable Hebrew had prepared his sacrifice and made the offering, the angel ascended in the flame thereof, leaving the astonished worshipper convinced that his offering was accepted. Christ was the great sacrifice for the sins of the world, and to which all the sacrifices of the old testament had reference. In him they had their efficacy and full accomplishment, and it is this last great sacrifice which we commemorate in the sacrament. Every time we partake thereof, may the divine spirit ascend with the flame of our devout affection, and like the angel of Manoah, bear the holy offering before the throne of God, to meet divine acceptance. In faith and obedience let us do our part, and say in resignation and peace, "thy will be done."

Affectionately your father,

JOHN HOWLAND.

PROVIDENCE, January 6, 1833.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER :

I received yours of the 30th of December, and am much pleased to know that you joined with your husband, in attendance on the communion. This is an expression of faith, incumbent on every one who believes that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and the redeemer of the world, as it is an act of obedience to his divine command, "do this in remembrance of me;" and I doubt not, but you will derive comfort and pleasing satisfaction in performing this act of obedience. I rejoice and give thanks to God, for the scripture views and sentiments as stated by you, of your worthy pastor, that you were not required to subscribe to, or declare your belief in doctrines.

which have been themes of contention and discord, among good christians since the days of the reformation. One of the articles declares, it is not lawful for the church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's word written, and our Saviour asked with some degree of earnestness—"Why even of yourselves, judge ye not what is right?" This is sufficient authority for the members of any church to have recourse to the bible as the only rule of faith and practice, in preference to articles of man's invention. The views of Mr. E., as I understood them, agree with those expressed by our Mr. Hall on the last communion Sabbath. The church in its larger sense, or the church universal, includes all the believers in Jesus Christ, of every denomination, and of all nations, tongues, and languages, throughout the world; and in this extensive sense, I understand the words of what is called in the Apostles' creed, "The Holy Catholic Church." This creed expresses in good language my faith, and when I attend Mr. C's church, I join with solemn feelings in the full expression of it. The Nicene creed, if the Convention of the Episcopal church could have had their own way, would have been left out of the book. It was rejected and omitted in the first edition, but the archbishop of Canterbury would not ordain the bishop till it was added. They still persisted in excluding the creed of Athanasius. That was too repugnant to the intelligence of the present age, and opposed to the light which has flowed in from the gospel. Other improvement will in the course of time be made in every church, and the christian world will before the final consummation of all things, witness the completion of the prediction, when they shall see eye to eye, and be included in one fold, under the Great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls. There are persons of different sentiments in every single church, of every denomination, yet so long as they hold the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, they will not fall out by the

way. Doct. Watts, in one of his hymns, predicts the time will come, when

“—The Greek the Jew,
Who paid the ancient worship or the new,”

shall all meet and harmonize. I was always pleased with a hymn of, I think, of your old favorite Henry Kirke White, which begins or ends thus :

The church on earth and all the dead
But one communion make,
All join in Christ their living head,
And of his grace partake.

Each congregation of worshippers is called a church, but the established church of England, call their whole establishment the church, not admitting any others to be included in the term. But in the larger or more liberal sense, there is but one church, the church universal, which includes all in every nation who believe with Saint Peter, “thou art the Christ the son of the living God.” This article of faith was ratified by our Saviour, when he declared, on this rock (this faith or this creed,) I will build my church. In this article of faith all christians profess to believe, though they have added numerous others of their own invention thereto, one of which, viz : that he himself is the living God, and at the same time the son of the living God, involves the strange absurdity that he is the son of himself.

Although my sentiments are decided, yet I never pretended to dictate them to my children. We always had the bible on the table, and the book-case filled with calvinistic, arminian, trinitarian, unitarian, episcopalian, presbyterian, moravian, and congregational divinity. I wished my children to read for themselves, and form their own opinions independent of any influence of mine ; and it is a high satisfaction to me, that they possessed talents and sound judgment sufficient for this purpose. There are but

three of you left to me in my old age, and I have reason to rejoice that all of you profess the faith which was once delivered to the Saints, and I pray that you may not only attain, but abide in fellowship with the Father and with his son Jesus Christ, as this is what the gospel requires, John 1:3. In the humble hope that this may be my case, I shall have strong expectations of meeting you, and your good partner, in the church triumphant, never more to be separated.

JOHN HOWLAND.

By constitutional temperament and from conviction, we find him a congregationalist. Each body of worshippers he held to be endowed with the right of self-government, and in no sense amenable to association, presbytery, synod, assembly or convocation for the conduct of its affairs. His preference was strengthened by what he had read and witnessed of the tendency of such bodies to centralize power, and embarrass or repress the free expression of thought. The Pilgrim Church of America, he considered a transcript of the models set up in the beginning at Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus and Rome, and as such a true exponent of "the liberty wherewith Christ makes free." Every clergyman, as he read the New Testament, was a bishop, equal in authority, and accountable only to his own flock and to the Great Head of the Church. Firm in these opinions, he was, as we have seen, tolerant of the opinions of others, and if he ever expressed himself with emphasis, it was to rebuke a pretentious spirit. To one of this character, not familiar with the modes of other denominations, and to whom he was describing an installation he had just previously attended, he said, "eleven bishops were

on the council. Bishop —— read the hymn, bishop —— preached the sermon, bishop —— offered the prayer of installation, and bishop —— pronounced the benediction." I did not know you had bishops in your church, remarked his surprised auditor. "O," responded Mr. H., with an expression of humor, "we have none but bishops for overseers of our congregations."

For many years before his decease, Mr. Howland looked upon death as near. The prospect, however, never for a moment disturbed his calm. He had disciplined his mind for the event, and the light of christian faith shed cheerfulness upon the grave. He awaited the day of his departure as a welcome release from the infirmities of the flesh, and as an introduction to the "better country," already endeared to him by many tender ties. With the feelings of a sojourner, and in the peace of a good conscience, he writes: "There is not a man now living, who owned any of the property in this town when I came to live here. I am among other generations, and in the midst of strangers. I am frequently inquired of, respecting those who have long since departed. It is a melancholy reflection, but I have no complaint to make. . . . I am in the constant acknowledgment of the great mercy of God, for the many blessings I have received from his adorable bounty. I have been generally favored with health; though it has pleased God to call many of our children to a better state of existence. I have never suffered for the want of money; I have always had enough for a comfortable support, and that is all that is necessary here."

Again he writes : " I am now in my ninety-second year. I am sensible that I possess many of the infirmities incident to old age. My time is short that I have to remain, but I shall leave the place much better than I found it." And at a still later period he writes : " Relying on the hopes set forth in the gospel, that faith in Jesus Christ, and obedience to his precepts and commands, is the only way of salvation, I expect shortly to leave the world ' with a sure and certain hope,' as the church funeral service expresses it."

And thus he lived by faith all the days of his appointed time until his change should come. And it came. The eye that witnessed a nation's birth, and watched its unprecedented growth, was dimmed. The ear that had listened to the voice of Washington and Greene, and had waited on the instructions of Rowland and Hitchcock, grew dull. The tremulous hand no longer held the pen to instruct or amuse, and the feeble feet refused to bear the devout worshipper to the sanctuary. One by one the powers of life faltered before the array of years. And on fifth of November, 1854, in the noon-day brightness of the holy Sabbath, the spirit of John Howland was yielded up to God who gave it.

His decease was respectfully noticed in the papers of the following morning, and resolutions expressive of the sense of his worth and services, were adopted and published by the Rhode Island Historical Society, and the Rhode Island Peace Society.

"The funeral was solemnized the Wednesday afternoon following his decease, at the First Congregational Church. The services were exceedingly impressive, and were attended not only by the immediate relatives of the deceased, but also by a large number of the young and old who had come up to show respect to the memory of the venerable and good man.

At two o'clock the corpse was borne into the church beneath the solemn music of the organ, attended by the following friends of the deceased as pall bearers, viz.: Henry Bowen, George Baker, Josiah Whitaker, John H. Hamlin, George Larned, and Nehemiah S. Draper.

Dr. Hedge commenced the services in the house, by the reading of various passages from the scriptures, selected with special reference to the life and character of the departed. He was followed by Dr. Hall, who, in a short address, alluded to some circumstances in Mr. Howland's life, to his long residence in Providence, and his intimate connection with the good works and moral enterprises of his day, both in public and private; and to his simplicity of manners, and remarkable tenderness of affection, which lasted even to the hour of his death. Dr. Hall's address was a touching and eloquent tribute to the memory of a just man. He spoke of his own intimate relation to the deceased. Twenty-two years ago, when he came to Providence to assume his present pastoral charge, Mr. Howland's house was the first house he entered among his future parishioners, and his voice spoke to him

the first word of welcome. He had always since then found him the genial and true-hearted friend, and the ever-ready christian helper. He had been a member of the church for a long series of years, and for a long time held the office of deacon. He was remarkable for his conscientious discharge of all duties, and was never absent from the worship of the Sabbath, until confined to his house by the infirmities of age. Dr. Hall closed with a prayer that the occasion might be suitably impressed and improved, after which the choir sang the 23d Psalm of David. A benediction was pronounced by the pastor, and the remains of the aged patriarch, followed by a long procession of relatives and friends, were borne to their last resting place in Swan Point Cemetery."*

In personal appearance, Mr. Howland was of medium height, frame compact and firmly knit, complexion light, eyes blue. Four portraits of him are extant. Two by Bass Otis, of Boston, painted in 1822; a third by Lincoln, of Providence, painted in 1841; and a fourth, by the same artist, in 1848. The last mentioned was procured by private subscription, and presented to the Rhode Island Historical Society. Of this the portrait in this volume is a copy. Two fac-simile autograph signatures are herein preserved; one affixed to the portrait, is a specimen of his chirography at the age of seventy-five; the other, to the family arms, written on his ninetieth birth day.

* Providence Journal, November 8, 1854.

Mr. Howland was a remarkable man. By this it is not meant that he was a genius, or pre-eminently brilliant, or that the poetic element predominated in his mental organization. Perhaps few men were less the creatures of imagination. But he was remarkable for the important events with which he was personally connected, the versatility of talent he displayed, the variety and extent of his knowledge, the many responsible duties to which he was called, the amount of labor he accomplished, and the universal hold he had upon the confidence and respect of the community. He seemed beyond most men of his years, to have had a true appreciation of the objects of life, and to have pursued those objects with singleness of purpose. Probably the main secret of his influence may be traced to these facts. He ever acted, so far as judgment can be predicated upon external evidence, on the conviction that society had claims upon him which he was bound to meet; and while he sought his own, he did not forget his neighbors' welfare. Hence, he devoted his time and endowments to human improvement, and to the advancement of the interests of others, with as much earnestness as he would have done had the results enured wholly to his benefit. In this respect his life is a worthy and instructive example. The strong tendency of the age to materialism,—to placing gain before godliness,—and in the eagerness to accumulate, to over-ride and trample under foot the finer and nobler qualities of man's nature, is too obvious to have escaped the notice of the observing; and it is

well, that at such a period, a voice from an honored grave should speak to us of better things, and incite us to higher aims.

The impression Mr. Howland made on those who had known him long and intimately, is happily expressed in the following extract from a letter, written by a clergyman now a resident of another State. "My intercourse with him was intimate, and stands in my memory and my heart among the grateful passages of my life. I honored and loved him as a high principled, noble spirited, earnest, devout, sincere christian man—as a public spirited, generous, pure minded, patriotic citizen,—as a most exemplary parent and friend,—as indeed beyond, far beyond, the ordinary standard, faithful in all relations. God's sun never shone on an honest, truer man. He was, however, a man of a very warm, and I should judge, by nature, passionate temperament, and therefore as might be supposed, liable to pretty strong prejudices. But he had also great self-government, and his judgment remained clear and reliable. . . . In our auxilliary Unitarian Association I only remember his devotedness to the cause of what he heartily cherished as the pure gospel.* He was conservative, yet no man loved progress more, a mean of qualities by no means incompatible, and indeed helping largely to complete the loftiest type of character. He was a benevolent man, and too, a beneficent one. No man among us was more bountiful in proportion to his means.

*Of this association Mr. Howland was several years president, and wrote the annual report for 1834.

His respect for our profession had just enough of the olden stamp, to help his excellent judgment and strong common sense make such manifestations of it as were most acceptable and gratifying to its members.* How he abhorred all time-serving, all meanness in every form, all shrinking from responsibilities which obviously belonged to a man, all double-facedness! It will always be to me a theme of praise to the Almighty, that he permitted me for many years such intimate intercourse with so valuable, conscientious and devoted a man. His sober common sense, and his solid wisdom, have been often to me full of instruction."

The moral of such a life is emphatic, and by every young man may be studied with profit. It shows how an inflexible will can overcome the disadvantages of limited opportunities; how the station assigned by the Providence of God, may be honored; how a name "more to be desired than great riches," may be won; and how the life of an individual may become a benediction to his race; and

* As a pertinent annotation on this statement, the following extracts from the manuscript diary of the late Rev. Dr. John Pierce, have been kindly furnished. In a record of his visit to Providence in 1815, he says, "The venerable John Howland, the fifth generation in descent from the man of his name in the *Mayflower*, who landed in Plymouth, 22d December, 1620, hearing of my purpose, rode from Dedham to Brookline, eight miles, some weeks since, for the purpose of inviting me to make his house my home during my intended visit." The invitation was accepted, and further on he adds, "On Saturday afternoon at 4, I took the cars for Providence at the depot in Boston. In a little more than two hours I safely arrived at the depot in Providence. There I found the venerable Mr. Howland awaiting my arrival. I found the establishment of this venerable patriarch to be every thing that could be desired. We had regular morning and evening devotions in imitation of the sons of the Pilgrims."

it declares, in a form more impressive than words, that the way to competency and happiness, to favor with God and man, is open to all, and that he alone who walketh therein, walketh surely.



APPENDIX.

MEMORIAL TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.—NOTE A. p. 140.

To the Hon. the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island, &c.,
to be holden at East Greenwich, on the last Monday in February,
A. D. 1799. The Memorial and Petition of the Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers, respectfully represents:—

That the means of Education which are enjoyed in this State, are very inadequate to a purpose so highly important: That numbers of the rising generation, whom nature has liberally endowed, are suffered to grow up in ignorance, when a common education would qualify them to act their parts in life with advantage to the public, and reputation to themselves:—That in consequence of there being no legal provision for the establishment of Schools, and for the want of public attention and encouragement, this so essential a part of our social duty is left to the partial patronage of individuals, whose cares cannot extend beyond the limits of their own families, while numbers in every part of the State, are deprived of a privilege which it is the common right of every child to enjoy: That when to that respect, which, as individuals we feel ourselves bound to render to the representatives of the people, we add our public declaration of gratitude for the privileges we enjoy as a corporate body, we at the same time solicit this Honorable Assembly to make legal provision for the establish-

ment of Free Schools, sufficient to educate all the children in the several towns throughout the State. With great confidence, we bring this our earnest solicitation before this Honorable Assembly, from the interest we feel in the public welfare, and from the consideration that our Society is composed of members, not originally of any one particular town, but assembled mostly in our early years from almost every town in the State: That we feel as individuals, the want of that education which we now ask to be betowed on those who are to succeed us in life, and which is so essential in transacting its common concerns. That we feel a still greater degree of confidence, from the consideration that while we pray this Honorable Assembly to establish Free Schools, we are, at the same time, advocating the cause of the great majority of children throughout the State, and in particular of those who are poor and destitute—the son of the widow and the child of distress: Trusting that our occupations as Mechanics and Manufacturers, ought not to prevent us from adding to these reasons an argument which cannot fail to operate with those, to whom are committed the guardianship of the public welfare, and that is. that liberty and security, under a republican form of government, depend on a general diffusion of knowledge among the people.

In confiding this petition and the reasons which have dictated it, to the wisdom of the Legislature, we assure ourselves that their decision will be such, as will reflect on this Honorable Assembly the praise and the gratitude, not only of the youth of the present generation, but of thousands, the date of whose existence is not yet commenced.

LETTER OF INSTRUCTIONS IN RELATION TO THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS —NOTE B. p. 142.

“To John Smith, William Rhodes, Thomas P. Ives, and David L. Barnes, Esqs.

Gentlemen—Placing in you the fullest confidence, we have selected you to assist in the public councils of the

State, not doubting your readiness to promote such measures, as may tend to advance the general interest, as combined with the private happiness of the people. It never being our intention to bind our representatives by instructions, in the ordinary business of legislation, we should not have addressed you at this time, but from the deep interest we feel in the question submitted by the General Assembly to their constituents. On the question of Free Schools, gentlemen, all party distinctions are broken down; here there can be no clashing interests. On this subject one section of the State cannot be opposed to another. Before this benevolent idea, every partial narrow motive of local policy must disappear. As we are confident, that the general object of the bill can meet with no opposition, the only question which can arise, will be on some of its particular provisions, as to the best mode of carrying its general principle into effect. On this point of the subject, we would recommend to you to support the adoption of the bill in its present form, as any inconvenience which may arise in particular districts, can, at any time, be removed after the law is in operation, when experience can point out to the legislature, the expediency of a different arrangement; but this we confide to your discretion, on the positive injunction, that the general system is not affected.

Fully confident of the patriotism of our fellow citizens throughout the State, that they are actuated by the same anxious solicitude for the public good, we doubt not but their representatives and ours will meet at the next session, bringing with them, the rich deposit of the public sentiment, and, by a unanimous voice, establish Free Schools throughout the State; then will that glory, which attaches itself to the purest benevolence, and to the highest acts of public virtue, rest on their heads, and the members of the Rhode Island Legislature, having thus before the close of the eighteenth century, provided for the full enjoyment of a right which forms so essential an article in the great sys-

tem of social order, will be mentioned with high expressions of gratitude and honor, through the ages and generations which are yet to succeed. It is nevertheless, the sense of the town, that, in case any particular alteration of the bill, to extend it to native Indians, or other people of color, or as it may respect any particular society, shall appear eligible, to the representatives on hearing before the General Assembly, these instructions are not to be construed to militate against any such amendment."

THE WAR OF 1812.—NOTE C. p. 210.

The assault upon Stonington and other places, and the appearance of the enemy off Newport, created apprehensions for the safety of Providence, and led to the adoption of measures to meet any emergency. On the 19th September, 1814, a public meeting of the citizens of Providence and vicinity, was held on the State House Parade, "for the purpose of concerting measures of defence against menaced invasion." Hon. James Burrill, jr., presided, and Hon. Thomas Burgess was chosen secretary. An eloquent and patriotic speech was made by Hon. Tristram Burges, spirited resolutions were passed, and a "committee of defence" chosen. This committee which held daily meetings for consultation in the Washington Insurance Office, consisted of Daniel Lyman, Nicholas Brown, Samuel G. Arnold, Cyrus Butler, Edward Carrington, Samuel Aborn, Samuel Thurber, Richmond Bullock, James Pettey, Caleb Earle, Sullivan Dorr, Ephraim Talbot, William Church, Charles Dyer, Christopher Rhodes, John S. Dexter, Tristram Burges, James Fenner, Henry Smith, and Zachariah Allen, who was appointed secretary.

District committees were also organized to co-operate with the general committee. The committee for the second district, of which Mr. Howland was chairman, called a meeting of the citizens of that district at the State House,

September 23d, "for the purpose of being enrolled, and tendering their services to the committee of defence for erecting fortifications." Ninety-four persons enrolled their names, viz: John Howland, Crawford Allen, Nathan Waterman, jr., P. O. Taylor, Abel Allen, Dudley C. Chappottin, Samuel Adams, Benjamin Wightman, jr., William B. Bradford, Caleb Allen, S. N. Richmond, John H. Hamlin, Joseph Jones, Joseph Dorr, Henry Jackson, Nathan Tingley, James Johnson, William Larned, Ebenezer K. Dexter, Benj. B. Olney, Samuel F. Mann, Richard Salisbury, Nathaniel Smith, Samuel Dawley, James M. Brown, Benj. Drake, Joseph Hacker, Jno. R. Balch, Simon Wheeler, Henry Edes, Thomas R. Holden, Jonathan Harding, S. E. Hamlin, Sylvanus Tingley, Samuel Tingley, jr., Charles Pollard, C. Moulton, Elijah Rider, John Cornell, S. Dorr, Isaac Bullard, James Burr, jr., Samuel P. Bullard, Alpheus Ammidon, David Howell, Timothy Temple, Edward Mason, Levi Wheaton, William Comstock, Seth Wheaton, Samuel Arnold, Alexander Jones, Benj. Smith, W. H. Cook, Geo. Freeman, Samuel Eddy, Asa Messer, D. Vinton, John L. Bowers, John Miller, Nathan Childs, Frederick A. Jencks, Benjamin W. Robbins, Jonas Hubbard, Ebenezer Foster, Stephen Gano, Amos M. Vinton, Thomas Andrews, John Snow, Luther Pearson, Edwin H. Harris, Joseph S. Freeman, Edward Knowles, Ambrose Duval, Thomas Vinton, Roger Allenton, Joseph T. Holroyd, William Holroyd, jr., John Burr, Galen Hodges, Jacobs Otis, Thomas Hartshorn, A. Tingley, John Newman, Thomas Rivers, George W. R. Corlis, Lebbeus L. Harding, James Snow, Henry Waterman, Samuel Lassell, Alexander M'Ginnis, Samuel Brown, Thomas Howard, Aaron Mann—94. To these are added the following "persons who attended with the district by themselves or substitutes, and who did not subscribe:" Edward Taylor, William Harding, Wheeler Martin, John K. Pitman, Geo. Jackson, Jonathan Cady, Henry Packard, Rufus Water-

man—8. Making a total of 102. This list was preserved by Mr. Howland. Whether the lists of volunteers in the other districts are extant, is unknown.

The districts were seven in number, and their several committees were as follows :

First district—Philip Martin, Thomas Abbott, Joel Metcalf, Stanford Newell. Second district—John Howland, William Larned, E. K. Dexter. Third district.—William Potter, Sanford Branch, Isaac Bowen, Stephen H. Smith. Fourth district—Benj. G. Dexter, Martin Page, Carlo Mauran, Benj. Clifford. Fifth district—Amasa Mason, Stephen Waterman, Stephen Tillinghast, Elisha Dyer. Sixth district—Samuel Jackson, Payton Dana, Samuel Ames, Samuel Jackson, 2d. Seventh district—Benjamin Aborn, Charles Hartshorn, Peleg Williams, Olney Dyer, Daniel C. Cushing.

The amount of labor, in days, expended in constructing fortifications in September and October, was as follows : United Train of Artillery, 145. Greene Association, 55. Marine Artillery, 120. Volunteer Company, 78. Light Dragoons, 60. Cadets, 140. Students of Brown University, 120. Gentlemen of the Bar, 28. Freemasons, 200. Free people of color, 96. Inhabitants of Seekonk, 150. Inhabitants of Gloucester, 120 ; of Scituate, 165 ; of Smithfield, 70 ; of Johnston, 190 ; of Burrilville, 60 ; of Foster and North Providence, 100 ; of Cumberland and Mendon, 90 ; of same, company of horse, 33 ; of Providence, 980 ; various other volunteers, 160. Total, 3160 days. Of this labor, 2022 days were performed by citizens of Providence. The first meeting of the "committee of defence" was held September 19th, 1814, and the last, January 16th, 1815.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY.—NOTE D.

At a special meeting of the Rhode Island Historical Society, held on the evening of Monday, the 6th day of November, A. D. 1854, it having been announced that

John Howland, Esq., who for the last twenty-one years has worthily filled the office of President of this Society, departed this life on the fifth day of November, instant, at the advanced age of ninety-seven years; it is therefore

Resolved, That, in common with our fellow-citizens, we, by this event, are called to mourn the departure of one whose faithful and conscientious discharge of various public trusts, entitles him to the grateful remembrance of the community in which he lived and died; a community, for whose welfare he was ever ready to unite in any work of moral or intellectual improvement; and which is deeply indebted to his early efforts for the advancement of its mechanic arts and the development of its industrial resources; to the persevering energy and enlightened zeal which directed his exertions for the establishment of its public schools; for the active benevolence of his labors in the founding and management of its first Institution for Savings, its society for the promotion of peace, and its first association in the cause of temperance.

Resolved, That in this event, we mourn the breaking of the last living tie which united us as a body, with those who bore the toils and met the dangers of our Revolutionary conflict; which has severed our earthly connection with one who stood with Washington on the field of battle; and who aided with his voice and his pen, in the consolidation of the union of the States, and in the adoption of their national Constitution.

Resolved, That we especially cherish his memory, as one of the founders and most devoted members of this Society; that we bear cheerful testimony to the strong interest which he ever manifested in the promotion of its objects; and to the fidelity with which he discharged the duties of its most important offices; and that we are grateful for the privilege of an association with him, in the work of preserving a history, with a large portion of which his own long life was so closely and honorably connected.

Resolved, That as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased, this Society, in a body, will attend his funeral.

Resolved, That we respectfully tender to the family of the deceased, our sympathy in their bereavement; and that a copy of these resolutions be transmitted to them, by the Secretary.

Resolved, That these resolutions be entered upon the Records of this Society, and published in the newspapers.

HENRY T. BECKWITH, Secretary.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE RHODE ISLAND PEACE SOCIETY.

NOTE—E.

At a special meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Rhode Island Peace Society, Nov. 14, 1854, the following resolutions were passed unanimously :

As it has pleased God to remove by death our venerable president, John Howland, at the great age of ninety-seven years, therefore—

Resolved, That we hereby place on record our grateful sense of his worth, and of his distinguished services to the cause of Peace, as well as many other social and moral enterprises.

Resolved, That by his earnest efforts among the earliest supporters of this Society, at a time when the avowal of interest and faith in such a cause required more courage than now—by his uniform attendance upon the meetings and furtherance of the objects of the Society, even after the infirmities of extreme age made it difficult for him to act at all—and by the fidelity with which he filled the office of president for many years, being elected to that office to the time of his death—Mr. Howland has created a more than common title to the respect and gratitude of all friends of Peace.

Resolved, That in the quiet influence of a life so protracted, and an example so consistent, we recognize the

great goodness of God ; and in the event of this removal we acknowledge a call upon all of us for increased devotion to this and every good object.

Resolved, That these resolutions be published in the papers of the city, and a copy of the same sent to the family of the deceased.

JOHN H. HAMLIN, Recording Secretary.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY.

NOTE F.

At an adjourned meeting of the Benevolent Congregational Society, holden Sunday, the 12th day of November, 1854, after morning service, the following resolutions were unanimously passed :

Whereas, in the departure, at the advanced age of ninety-seven years, of our venerable friend, John Howland, who was connected with this society for three quarters of a century ; who was constant in his attendance on public worship, ever jealous for the name, and watchful for the prosperity of the First Congregational Church and Society, whose good deeds were not confined within his own household of faith, but who was known in the community for his faithful observance of public duties ; his integrity, honor, truthfulness and patriotism ; by whose influence the cause of education, philanthropy and religion were strengthened ; who was an eminently just man, fearing God, and through the varied experience of his long life, walking in the ways of his commandments ; this society and community have lost an esteemed associate and citizen ;

Therefore, resolved, That with feelings of gratitude for his friendly counsels, his acceptable services as a member and an officer of this church and society, as well as for his useful example, we here record our tribute to his memory, thankful that he was spared to accomplish so much, and happy in the assurance that he now rests in peace.

Resolved, That the Secretary be directed to communicate a copy of the foregoing resolutions to the family of the deceased.

SAMUEL W. PECKHAM, Secretary.

WILL OF THE PILGRIM JOHN HOWLAND—NOTE G.

The last will and testament of Mr. John Howland, of Plymouth, late deceased, exhibited to the Court, held at Plymouth, on the fifth day of March, A. D. 1672, on the oaths of Mr. Samuel Fuller and Mr. William Crow, as followeth :

Know all men to whom these presents shall come, that I, John Howland, sen'r, of the town of New Plymouth, in the colony of New Plymouth, in New England, in America, this twenty-ninth day of May, one thousand six hundred seventy and two, being of whole mind and in good and perfect memory and remembrance, praised be God, being now grown aged, having many infirmities of body upon me, and not knowing how soon God will call me out of this world, do make and ordain these presents to be my testament, containing herein my last will in manner and form following :

Imprimis. I will and bequeath my body to the dust, and my soul to God that gave it, in hopes of a joyful resurrection unto glory. And as concerning my temporal estate, I dispose thereof as followeth :

Item. I do give and bequeath unto John Howland, my eldest son, besides what lands I have already given him, all my right and interest to that one hundred acres of land granted me by the Court, lying on the eastern side of Taunton river, between Titicut and Taunton bounds,

NOTE.—The date of the probate of the will, according to the present practice, ought to be 1673. The year at that time began on the 25th of March. It was formerly the usage to double date from the first of January to the last of March, thus: 1672-3, and which we should now date 1673.

and all the appurtenances and privileges thereto belonging, to belong to him and his heirs and assigns forever ; and if that tract should fail, then to have all my right, title and interest by and in that last court grant to me, in any other place, to belong to him, his heirs and assigns forever.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my son, Jabez Howland, all those my uplands and meadows that I now possess at Satuckett and Paomett, and places adjacent, with all the appurtenances and privileges belonging thereto, and all my right, title and interest therein, to belong to him, his heirs and assigns forever.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my son, Jabez Howland, all that my one piece of land that I have lying on the south side of the Mill brook, in the town of Plymouth, aforesaid, be it more or less, and it is on the north side of a certain tract that is now Giles Richards, sen., to belong to the said Jabez, his heirs and assigns forever.

Item. I give and bequeath unto Isaac Howland, my youngest son, all those my uplands and meadows, divided and undivided, with all the appurtenances and privileges unto them belonging, lying and being in the town of Middleborough, and in the tract of land called the Major's purchase, near Namassakett Ponds, which I have bought and purchased of William White, of Marshfield, in the colony of New Plymouth, which may or shall appear by any deed or writing that is given under the said White's hand, all such deeds or writings, together with the aforementioned particular, &c., to belong to the said Isaac, his heirs and assigns forever.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my said son, Isaac Howland, the one half of my twelve acre lot of meadow that I now have at Winnetuesett river, within the town of Plymouth, aforesaid, to belong to him the said Isaac Howland, his heirs and assigns forever.

Item. I will and bequeath unto my dear and loving wife, Elizabeth Howland, the use and benefit of my now

dwelling house in Rockey Nook, in Plymouth, aforesaid, with the outhousing lands, that is uplands and meadow lands, and all appurtenances thereto belonging in the town of Plymouth, and all other lands, housing and meadows, that I have in said town of Plymouth, excepting what meadow and upland I have before given to my sons, Jabez and Isaac Howland, during her natural life, to enjoy, make use of, and improve for her benefit and comfort.

Item. I give and bequeath to my son, Joseph Howland, after the decease of my loving wife, Elizabeth Howland, my aforesaid dwelling house at Rockey Nook, together with all the outhousing uplands and meadows, appurtenances and privileges belonging thereunto, and all other housing uplands and meadows that I have within the aforesaid town of New Plymouth, excepting what lands and meadows I have before given to my two sons, Jabez and Isaac, to belong to him, the said Joseph Howland, to him and his heirs and assigns forever.

Item. I give and bequeath to my daughter, Desire Gorham, twenty shillings.

Item. I give and bequeath to my daughter, Hope Chipman, twenty shillings.

Item. I give and bequeath to my daughter, Elizabeth Dickenson, twenty shillings.

Item. I give and bequeath to my daughter, Lydia Brown, twenty shillings.

Item. I give and bequeath to my daughter, Hannah Bosworth, twenty shillings.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my daughter, Ruth Cushman, twenty shillings.

Item. I give to my grand child, Elizabeth Howland, the daughter of my son, John Howland, twenty shillings.

Item. My will is that these legacies given to my daughters, be paid by my executrix in such space as she thinketh meet.

Item. I will and bequeath unto my loving wife, Eliza-

beth Howland, my debts and legacies being first paid, my whole estate, viz: lands, houses, goods, chattels, or any thing else that belongeth or appertaineth unto me, undisposed of, be it either in Plymouth, Duxborough, Middleborough, or any other place whatever, I do freely and absolutely give and bequeath to my dear and loving wife, Elizabeth Howland, whom I do by these presents make, ordain and constitute to be the sole executrix of this my last will and testament, to see the same truly and faithfully performed according to the tenor thereof. In witness whereof, I, the said John Howland, senior, have hereunto set my hand and seal, the aforesaid twenty-ninth day of May, one thousand six hundred seventy and two, 1672.

JOHN HOWLAND.

{ SEAL. }

Signed and sealed in the presence of

SAMUEL FULLER,
WILLIAM CROW.

THE PILGRIM JOHN HOWLAND'S ESCAPE FROM DROWNING.—NOTE H.—p. 6.

Gov. Bradford, speaking of the storms the *Mayflower* encountered on her voyage to Plymouth, says, "In sundrie of these stormes the winds were so feirce, and ye seas so high, as they could not beare a knote of saile, but were forced to hull, for diuerce days together. And in one of them, as they lay thus at hull, in a mightie storme, a lustie yonge man (called John Howland) coming upon some occasion above ye grattings, was, with a seele of ye shipe throwne into [ye] sea; but it pleased God yt he caught hould of ye top-saile halliards which hunge over board, and rane out at length; yet he hild his hould (though he was sundrie fadomes under water) till he was hald up by ye same rope to ye brime of ye water, and then with a

boat hooke and other means got into ye ship againe, and his life saved; and though he was something ill with it, yet he lived many years after, and became a profitable member, both in church and comone wealth."*

GENEALOGY OF THE HOWLAND FAMILY.—NOTE I.

In the introductory chapter of this volume, the names and marriages of the children of the Pilgrim John Howland are mentioned. In this note is given so much of the family genealogy as is necessary to indicate the line of descent of the subject of these pages.

Jabez Howland, second son of John and Elizabeth, of Plymouth, married Bethiah Thacher, and settled in Bristol, R. I. They had five sons, Jabez, b. Sept. 15, 1669; Josiah, b. Aug. 1, 1676; John, b. July 26, 1679; Samuel, b. in Bristol; Joseph, b. in Bristol, Oct. 14, 1692.—From the four first named are descended a numerous posterity.

Joseph, youngest son of Jabez and Bethiah Howland, and grandson of Pilgrim John, married Bathsheba Cary, to whom were born Lydia, Nov. 6, 1715; Joseph, Dec. 6, 1717; Elizabeth, Feb. 14, 1719. Joseph, the father, died Aug. 16, 1737.

Joseph Howland, son of Joseph and Bathsheba, and great grandson of John, of Plymouth, settled in Newport, R. I., and married Sarah Barker, daughter of Jeremiah and Penelope Barker. They had Henry, b. 1751, who married Susan Baker;† Penelope, b. 1755, who married captain John Taber; John, b. Oct. 31, 1757; removed to Providence, and married Mary Carlisle, dau. of John and Elizabeth Carlisle, and g. g. dau. of James Franklin, Jan. 28, 1788.

John and Mary Carlisle Howland, had Alfred, Penelope,

* Hist. Plymouth Colony, p. 76.

† Their only son, Benjamin Baker Howland, is the present town clerk, and clerk of probate in Newport.

Benjamin Russell, Janetta, Mary, and eight children who died under the age of three years.

RECAPITULATION:

First generation—John Howland and Elizabeth his wife, of the Mayflower company.

Second generation—Jabez Howland and Bethiah Thacher, his wife.

Third generation—Joseph Howland and Bathsheba, his wife.

Fourth generation—Joseph Howland and Sarah, his wife.

Fifth generation—Henry Howland and Susan, his wife; Penelope Howland and her husband, captain John Taber; John Howland and Mary, his wife; Benjamin Howland and Susan, his wife. On page 13, it is incorrectly stated that John Howland was of the fourth generation from the Pilgrim. The error escaped notice until the sheet had been printed.

NOTE J.—p. 202.

At a meeting of the United Train of Artillery Company, Monday, 24th April, 1797,

Voted, That the thanks of this Company be presented to lieutenant John Howland, for his faithful attention in the discharge of his duty as an officer in this Company; and that the clerk present him with a copy of the same.

True copy,

BENJ. CLIFFORD, Clerk.

NOTE K.

In 1808, and again in 1809, Mr. Howland was commissioned Justice of the Peace, under the official seal of governor James Fenner.

NOTE L.

At a dinner of the Rhode Island Historical Society, July 21st, 1829, Mr. Howland being called on for a sentiment, prefaced it with the following observations :

In the year 1636, Roger Williams and Thomas Angell embarked in a canoe at Seekonk Cove, and after crossing the deep bed of the river, passed down along the western edge of the stream, till they came opposite a *small indent* in the land, where they observed a company of Indians with their Squaws and Papooses, roasting Clams. With that confidence in, and knowledge of the Indian character, for which he was always distinguished, Williams rested on his paddles. The natives advanced to the edge of the bank, and saluted the strangers with the friendly welcome of *what-cheer!*—*what-cheer!* Williams and his companion landed, and reciprocated their friendly greetings. From this auspicious moment, the history of the State of Rhode Island may be said to commence. The site where this interview took place, and the land adjoining, received from the first settlers the name of *Whatcheer*, and by this appellation it is known in the ancient title deeds. In the division of the lands of the Providence purchase among the first proprietors, the lands around the Cove fell to the share of Roger Williams, who was the first governor of the colony. Part of it afterwards was owned by Benedict Arnold, the first governor under the present charter; he removed to Newport. Another division of the same *Whatcheer*, became the property of governor Stephen Hopkins, who was one of the signers of the memorable declaration of Independence. Another considerable portion of the same tract was the property of governor Nicholas Cooke. The whole of this most interesting location then became by purchase or inheritance, the property and the seat of governor Arthur Fenner, and from him it has descended, and is the property and present residence of his excellency James Fenner, governor of the State, and president of this society.

History, in this country, will in its details, its character, and its objects, necessarily assume a different form from that of the Eastern continent. There, the progress of man and of society, from the state of barbarism to civilization and order, must fill its first pages. The contests of Kings and military commanders, war, massacres, battles, and devastation supply the rest. Here, their place is scarcely known. Incidents and transactions which *there* receive no attention, will *here* possess a lively and commanding interest. In Rhode Island history, the circumstances which we have noticed, if not thought of sufficient import to be mentioned in the body of the work, ought at least, to find a place in a marginal note. I will therefore, by your permission, present it to your notice in this form :

The pleasant land at *Whatcheer Cove* : 198 years ago the friendly greeting of the native tribe from this place, was received by the pilgrims who approached it, as a presage of future rest. The high honors and pleasing reminiscences, of this beautiful landscape, derived from five former generations of governors, are increased by the sixth, in the person of the present proprietor.

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